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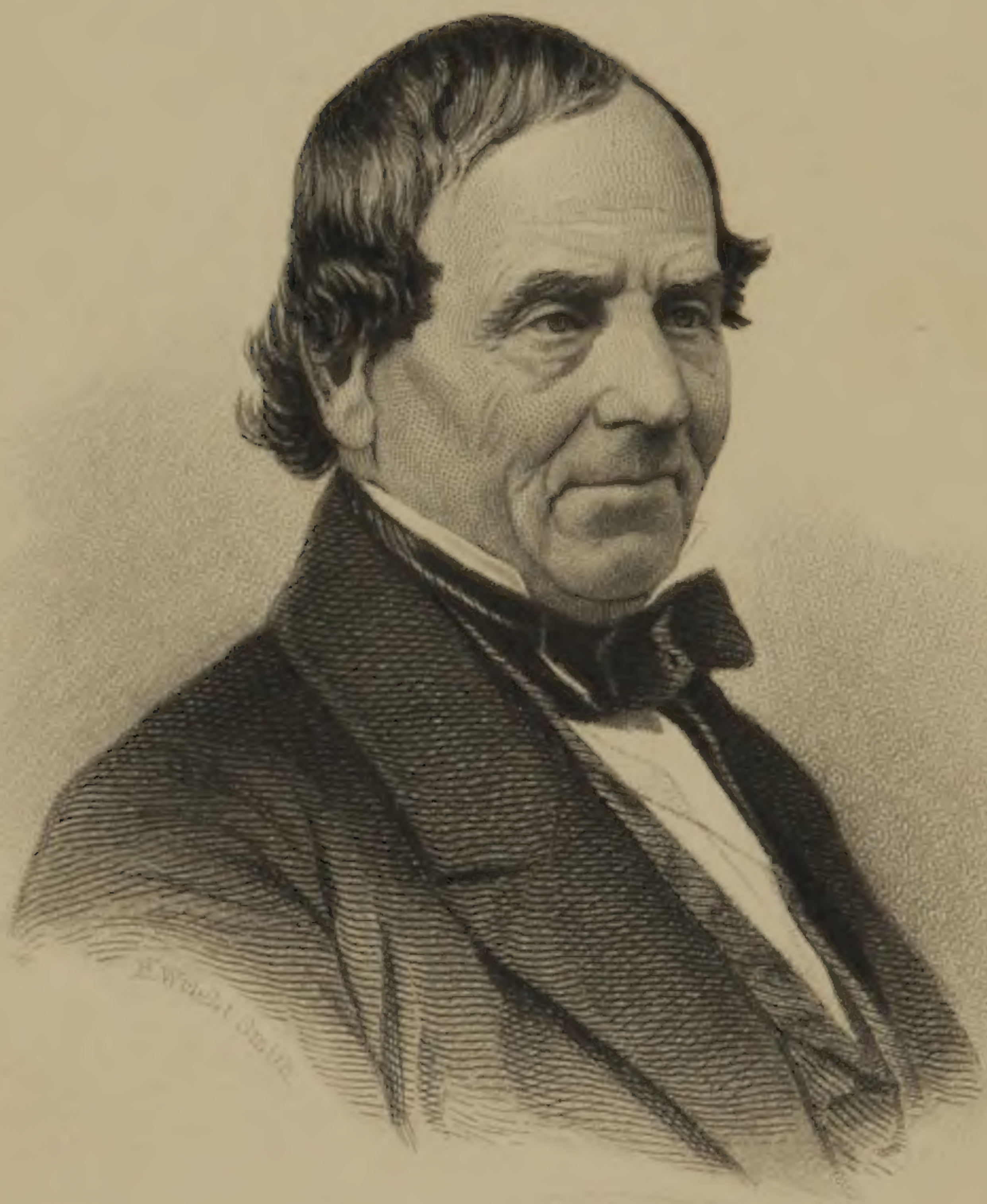
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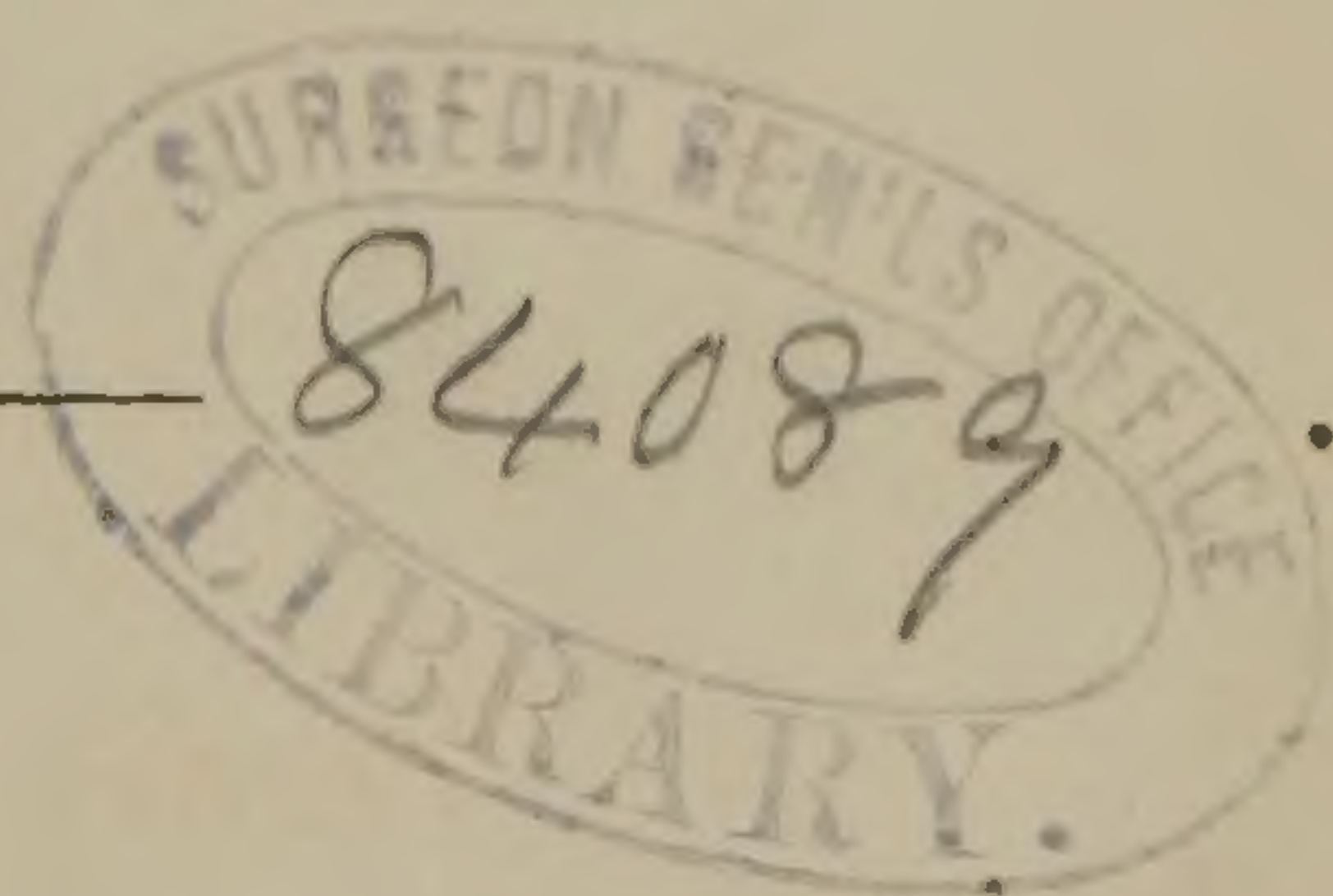
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Usher Parsons

1788-1868.

MEMOIR
OF
USHER PARSONS, M. D.,
OF
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

BY HIS SON,
CHARLES W. PARSONS.
...



PROVIDENCE:
HAMMOND, ANGELL & CO., PRINTERS.
1870.

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Film No. 6742, no. 2

This Memoir
IS DEDICATED TO
EDWIN PARSONS,
OF NEW YORK,
MY FATHER'S NEPHEW,
AND THE
CHOSEN FRIEND, ADVISER, AND COMPANION
OF HIS LATER YEARS.

P R E F A C E.

MY father left a large amount of manuscript material illustrating different portions of his life. He had gathered together, probably during his visits to his native town, many fragments relating to the period of his boyhood and youth, which he had marked “juvenile.” The documents pertaining to his naval career are particularly abundant, consisting of letters, diaries, hospital records, official accounts, requisitions and other papers, many of them of so little permanent importance as to make me wonder at their preservation, when I found them after his death. For many years he kept a diary. He also filled a series of note-books with more extended records of incidents in his life, reflections and reminiscences, containing many passages which throw great light on his personal history, and his modes of thinking.

From these manuscript sources, and from various works already in print,—his own and others,—and from my own recollections, this memoir has been compiled, as a grateful work of pious duty. The portion relating to his naval life may seem disproportionately long; but this is explained by the more abundant materials, and by the great importance of that period in forming his character and establishing his position among men. The life of a practising physician affords little incident for narrative; its record must be kept in the

memory of those whom he has served, and usually dies with them. Accordingly, my father's professional career in civil practice is described in a few pages, and in general terms. The chronological order which was followed in the early part of this memoir naturally gives place afterward to a summary of the varied studies and interests with which my father was connected, given in the order of subjects rather than of dates.

The fac-similes on pages 40 and 47 are from original documents found among his ample collections. They represent the signatures of his first ancestors of the name in this country, Joseph Parsons, of Springfield, and Joseph Parsons, of Northampton, of "Charles Frost, major," and of Commodores Perry and Elliott. They were carefully prepared by Mr. W. S. Hoyt, of Providence. These fac-similes, as well as some disconnected writings of my father, which are thrown together in the appendix, will have their value in the estimation of some antiquarian readers.

C. W. P.

PROVIDENCE, August 18, 1870.

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MEMOIR.

USHER PARSONS was the youngest of nine children, of William and Abigail Frost (Blunt) Parsons, of Alfred, York county, Maine.

His first ancestor of the name, in this country, was Joseph Parsons (1), who arrived from England in 1635, and was one of the earliest inhabitants of Springfield, and afterwards of Northampton, Massachusetts. His oldest son, Joseph (2), was a prominent citizen and trader in Northampton; born in Springfield, 1647, he died at Northampton, 1729. His oldest son, Joseph (3), graduated at Harvard college, 1697, was a pupil and admirer of Rev. Increase Mather, was clergyman at Lebanon, Connecticut, and afterwards at Salisbury, Massachusetts, and died there, 1740. His oldest son, Joseph (4), graduated 1720, was minister at Bradford, Massachusetts, from 1726 till his death in 1765. He married Frances, daughter of John Usher, lieutenant-governor of New Hampshire.

Rev. Joseph Parsons (4), of Bradford, had six sons who grew up. Of these, three went through Harvard college, and were, respectively, clergyman, physician and lawyer; these three died at an average age of less than thirty-four. The other three, children of the

same father and mother, and brought up in the same home, did not go to college, but were mechanics or traders, and reached an average age of seventy-six. The fifth son, William (5), was a trader, farmer, manufacturer of lumber and potash, and a town-officer. He was born at Bradford, 1743, settled in South-Berwick, Maine, and moved thence to Alfred, then a part of Sanford, in 1775, and died in Alfred, August 4, 1826.

William Parsons married Abigail Frost Blunt, daughter of Rev. John Blunt, of Newcastle, New Hampshire, whose wife was daughter of Hon. John Frost, and of his wife Mary, sister of Sir William Pepperrell. Usher Parsons (6) was son of William. This sketch of his ancestry, drawn from materials collected by himself, accounts for his peculiar christian name, and also for his interest in the history of the families of Frost and Pepperrell.

Usher Parsons was born in Alfred, which was still a part of Sanford, August 18, 1788. His boyhood was spent there. He attended the village school in winter, and worked on his father's farm in summer. On the last night of the year 1799, he was told by his sister of the death of Washington, and afterward walked with the other school-children in a funereal procession, wearing crape. He was sent to Berwick academy in May, 1800, and attended there about one year. He afterward served in retail stores at Portland and Wells (now Kennebunk).* His service at Wells ended March 29,

* The following recommendation was written by the father of the late Charles C. Little, of the firm of Little, Brown & Co., Boston: "This may certify that I, the subscriber, of Wells, have employed Usher Parsons as a clerk to assist me in my store for upwards of

1807 : and on May 6th, he entered the office of Dr. Abiel Hall, of Alfred, as a student of medicine. He here saw a little practice, studied the human bones, and read Cullen's First Lines, and the works of Darwin and Brown. He was often interrupted to help on his father's farm, and taught school in Alfred, Berwick, Kittery and other towns.

In the autumn of 1809, he had already attended one course of anatomical lectures at Fryeburg, Maine, by Dr. Alexander Ramsay, an educated Scotchman, an enthusiast in anatomy, who first inspired him with interest in this pursuit. Many years later, he wrote as follows in regard to this period in his life :—

“ Being disappointed of a remittance from my father of some money to enable me to attend a second course of lectures in Portland, by Dr. Ramsay, I walked about fifteen miles in the night, nearly to Saco, slept a few hours on some hay in a barn, and reached Kennebunk the following noon, and Alfred in the evening. During my moonlight walk, I meditated on the past and the future course of my life. I thought of the mis-spent time of my past years, of my low aims in the medical profession, until within the last few weeks, and asked if it would be possible, at this my twenty-first year, to begin a new course, that should redeem the time, and elevate me to a respectable rank in the medical profession. I was now wanting in preparatory education, unable to parse the most simple sentence in Latin, and hardly able to write a common letter in English grammatically. I had no means of educating myself but by school-keeping. How many years am I willing, I asked, to devote to this and to hard study for the attainment

eight months ; and have proved him to be a capable Lad, possess of steady habits, and well calculated for book-keeping.

“ DAVID LITTLE.”

“ WELLS, August 16th, 1806.”

of a rank in the profession that, with my present ambitious views, I shall be satisfied with? I concluded that ten years would be required, and determined that all my energies should be employed for that length of time, and to be satisfied could I arrive at eminence in respect to knowledge, although the tenth year should find me as penniless as at this hour.

“My resolution was now fixed and my plans matured this night, and in the main were not deviated from during that length of time. I determined to obtain the degree of A. M. and M. D., and to become a teacher of anatomy. On arriving at Alfred, I packed up my Latin books, and went to Sanford, four miles off, and placed myself in the family of Parson Sweat.* I began with the Latin grammar, and by the last of November, had gone over it several times and read two books in Virgil, and was able to read the Greek Testament a little. I then taught school two months in Elliot; then returned to Parson Sweat’s a few months; then went in May to keep school three months half a mile from Berwick academy; then attended the academy one quarter, and read two or three of the Evangelists [in Greek,] and four orations against Catiline; then kept school at Alfred three months, and, during evenings, read Virgil nearly through, finished the Evangelists and the book of Romans. I now felt that to go through college in this tedious way, would be likely to consume the ten years. I therefore concluded to return to medicine; to read a few months with Dr. Hall, at Alfred, and then study with some very eminent person six months, which would complete my three years, to attend a course of lectures, and then commence practice, or be ready to commence whenever a vacancy offered, and endeavor to go through the college studies whilst trying to get into practice. Accordingly I went to Dr. Kittredge, of Andover, but found him from home. I then went to Boston, and entered the office of Dr. John Warren, for six months. It was with much difficulty that I got through with the expense of lectures and board, although assisted to fifty dollars by my father.”

* For a notice of Rev. Moses Sweat, see Appendix.

He went to Boston in or about July, 1811, and boarded at the "Market Tavern," with his brother-in-law, General Samuel Leighton, then Representative in the General Court from Elliot. His instructor was the eminent surgeon, Dr. John Warren, brother of General Joseph Warren who fell at Bunker's hill, and father of the late Dr. John Collins Warren.

He was examined by the Censors of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and approved and licensed as "a Practitioner in Medicine," February 7, 1812. His license is signed by Drs. Lemuel Hayward, Thomas Welsh, Aaron Dexter, Josiah Bartlett and William Spooner, as Censors; by John Warren, President, and J. C. Warren, Recording Secretary of the Society. He went from Boston home to Alfred. The war with England was now impending, and offered new opportunities to young medical men. I again quote from his own sketch of his early life:—

"After an unsuccessful attempt to get a school, to repair my wardrobe, I went to Exeter to get a place as physician, but was soon discouraged. I then went to Dover for a few months, but received no encouragement, and the expenses here added to my debts and poverty. There was now a prospect of war, and I tried hard for a place of surgeon's mate in the army, but failed. At length an invitation was forwarded me by the surgeon of the John Adams to join him as mate, assuring me he would try to get my appointment of mate confirmed by a commission, but adding that I must be in Boston in sixty hours. I made all dispatch, but did not reach there till sixty-four hours, and then found the ship had sailed. I was now left with one dollar, but succeeded in borrowing another, and returned. At Salem, I tried for a berth on board a privateer. I reached Dover discouraged indeed, and not a little mortified. A few weeks previous to this, I had applied

for a mate's commission in the navy, but despaired of success, and I had now no hope left but that a chance might offer in a privateer. In about four days from my return from Boston, I was told there was a package in the office for me. I went and found it to be a commission of surgeon's mate in the navy, my pay to commence from that day. No one can imagine my joy; it was ecstatic, frantic."

His commission was obtained through the aid of Dr. Josiah Bartlett, Member of Congress from New Hampshire.* It was dated July 6, 1812.

He soon received an order from the Navy Department, dated August 15, to report on board the corvette, the John Adams, at New York, the same vessel he had lately attempted to reach at Boston. In September, he volunteered, with most of the officers and men of that vessel, for an expedition under command of Commodore Isaac Chauncey, the exact nature of which was unknown to most of them, though supposed to be for frontier service on the great lakes. It seems that no order to him to join this expedition appeared on the records of the department; and this circumstance afterward caused him some difficulty in obtaining pay. In October, orders were sent him, directed to New York, to repair to Georgia.

The troops set out from Brooklyn navy yard in sloops for Albany, September 24; reached Albany on

* Dr. Bartlett wrote him from Washington, May 30: "I this day called on the Secretary of the Navy respecting your appointment in the medical department of that establishment. Mr. Hamilton informed me no vacancy now existed, but on examining your recommendations he ordered your name to be inserted specially, as he termed it, in the list of candidates, and said vacancies frequently occur; that your recommendations were so good you should obtain the first that offered."

the 29th, and travelled thence to Buffalo in wagons and on foot, arriving there October 17. On this journey, and through the two years of service that followed, he kept a full diary, which is still preserved.

Through the following winter and spring, 1812-13, he was in charge of the sick and wounded at Black Rock, near Buffalo, living first in a tent, and afterward in barracks. During the winter, an epidemic pleuropneumonia prevailed, of which he wrote an account for a Buffalo newspaper, being his first medical publication. This article is quite characteristic, and is reprinted in the Appendix. It illustrates the influences under which his views of medical practice were formed, and also his inclination to controversial writing.

Late in November, 1812, an attempt was made to storm a battery on the Canada side of Niagara river, as a preliminary to landing General Smyth's army, with a view of taking Upper Canada. The movement failed ingloriously. Several men were killed, and others badly wounded, affording Dr. Parsons some surgical experience. A few days later, he crossed the river with a flag of truce to ask for the body of an American officer; the request was denied, but the British officers conversed pleasantly.

On May 27, 1813, the British post near the mouth of Niagara river, Fort George, was successfully attacked. The other British forts were abandoned in consequence, and the whole Niagara frontier was in possession of the Americans. Fort Erie opposite Black Rock was deserted and its magazine was blown up. In his diary, May 28, Dr. Parsons writes: "At about 7 o'clock, the enemy blew up their magazines at

all the forts. In the afternoon, Dr. Purcell, a citizen and myself, with about twenty others crossed. We took two prisoners at the shore, and marched to Fort Erie, leaving the prisoners and others in the boat. On our arriving near the fort, two men met us with a flag of truce and surrendered themselves. We now walked into the fort and were treated with great hospitality. Dr. Purcell and the other gentleman returned to the boat, and sent information to Colonel Preston of our discoveries. In the evening, the colonel and regiment crossed and took possession." This story of his receiving the surrender of Fort Erie was a favorite anecdote with him, many years after.

In March, Captain Oliver H. Perry had arrived from Newport, Rhode Island, at Erie, or Presqu' isle, Pennsylvania, on the southern shore of the lake, to superintend the outfitting of a fleet that was to contend successfully with a British squadron for the command of Lake Erie, and to free a long frontier from the constant danger of attack. In June, Perry came to Black Rock for the purpose of taking to Erie five small merchant vessels, armed with one or two guns each. Dr. Parsons was still there, in charge of the invalids, and joined Captain Perry. They sailed June 14. Nearly half the crews were soon on the sick list. On arriving at Erie, part of the sick were placed in a large unfinished court house, converted into a hospital. Dr. Parsons remained at Erie till August. In addition to the care of the sick, he enjoyed the acquaintance of several families there. The presence of naval officers led to some gaiety, and he attended parties and balls.

The little squadron sailed from Erie, August 12,

toward the head of the lake. On the 19th, they were visited by General William Henry Harrison, with his aid, Colonel Lewis Cass, and other officers. On the 26th, they arrived near the mouth of Detroit river, and thence sailed to Sandusky, and anchored among the islands of Put-in-Bay. Many on board were attacked with bilious remittent fever, including the commodore and more than half the officers. The two other surgeons were confined for some weeks before and after the battle of September 10th. Dr. Parsons writes: "I did not escape an attack myself, which confined me two or three days, and, during this time, more than one hundred lay sick without any medical aid." His diary, September 3d, says: "I never was so much emaciated." In his published narrative of the battle, he writes as follows:—

"In this weakened condition, with only one doctor in the squadron to attend the sick and take charge of the wounded of a battle, we met the enemy [September 10]. The action was soon very severely felt on board the *Lawrence*, the two largest vessels of the enemy engaging her at short distance for nearly two hours. The *Lawrence* being shallow-built, and affording no cock-pit, or place of security for the wounded, they were received on the ward-room floor, which was nearly level with the surface of the water. Being only ten or twelve feet square, this floor was soon covered, which made it necessary to pass them out into another apartment, as fast as the bleeding could be stanchcd. Several, however, were wounded a second time before this could be done. Midshipman Laub was moving from me with a tourniquet on his arm, when a cannon ball struck him in the breast; and a seaman brought down with both arms fractured was struck by a cannon ball in both legs. An hour and a half had so far swept the deck that new appeals for surgical aid were less frequent. This change

was rendered the more desirable at this time, from the circumstance that the repeated request of the commodore to spare him another man had taken from me the last one stationed to assist in moving the wounded; in fact, many of the wounded themselves took the deck at this critical moment."

"Having sole charge of the wounded of the whole fleet, and the wounded being passed down to me for aid faster than I could attend to them in a proper manner, I aimed only to save life during the action by tying arteries or applying tourniquets to prevent fatal hemorrhage, and sometimes applying splints as a temporary support to shattered limbs, &c. In this state the patients remained until the following morning, under the free use of cordials and anodynes. At sunrise [the 11th], I began amputations, and in the course of the whole day and evening, was able to finish all operations and dress at least once or twice, and to do justice to them all. On the following day, I visited the other vessels and brought all the wounded on board the Lawrence and treated them in like manner."

It appears by his diary, that this removal of wounded from other vessels to the Lawrence took place on the 14th. On the 13th, two British surgeons met him in consultation. The 14th, a surgeon was sent to his aid from General Harrison's army. Two accounts of the battle, written by Dr. Parsons at the time, are quoted in the Appendix. Many incidents in regard to his personal experiences during the battle are mentioned in his various historical addresses, to which we shall hereafter allude.

Commodore Perry, in a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, wrote:—"Of Dr. Usher Parsons, surgeon's mate, I cannot say too much. In consequence of the disability of both the other surgeons, Drs. Horsely and Barton, the whole duty of operating, dressing and attending nearly an hundred wounded, and as many

sick, devolved entirely on him ; and it must be pleasing to you, sir, to reflect that, of the whole number wounded, only three have died. I can only say that, in the event of my having another command, I should consider myself particularly fortunate in having him with me as a surgeon." Dr. Parsons's diary shows twenty-two killed outright on board the *Lawrence*, and several others had limbs shattered who died that day or in the night. The wounded on the *Lawrence*, were sixty-one ; in the whole squadron, ninety-six. He attributed his general success with the wounded to the fresh air, (they being lodged on the deck of the *Lawrence*, sheltered by an awning and tarpaulins), to a plentiful supply of fresh provisions, vegetables and cordials, and the cheering influence of victory. The *Lawrence* reached Erie, September 23 ; and a hospital for the wounded and sick, including many British prisoners, was then established in the court house. Dr. Parsons remained there in charge of this hospital for nearly nine months. His residence at Erie led to many friendships and endearing associations, which were renewed long afterward, and gave him great pleasure in his declining years.

In common with other commissioned officers of the fleet, Dr. Parsons received, by vote of Congress, a silver medal bearing the likeness of Perry and a representation of the battle, with suitable inscriptions. His share of prize money first gave him a feeling of pecuniary independence ; one of his earliest uses of the money was to pay debts incurred in obtaining his medical education. But a much more important reward of his services on Lake Erie was the warm friendship of

Commodore Perry, and the commencement of a surgical reputation.

From January 1 to February 5, 1814, he served as surgeon of the 17th Regiment, Pennsylvania militia, doing duty at Erie, by order of Major General David Mead.

He was promoted to the rank of surgeon, April 15, 1814. On June 19, he sailed with the fleet from Erie for Detroit and Lake Huron. At Detroit, troops were taken on board intended to attack Fort Mackinac, under Colonel Croghan; the fleet then sailed through Lakes St. Clair and Huron, and made an unsuccessful attack on the Fort, losing several officers and men. The fleet then returned, and Dr. Parsons was at Buffalo, September 1, and back at Erie on the 21st.

Perry had returned to the sea-board, and been appointed to command the new frigate *Java*, building at Baltimore, and was allowed to select his own officers. He chose several of his companions in lake service, among others, Dr. Parsons, who on the second of December 1814, received orders to report to Perry at Baltimore. He was attached to the *Java*, under Perry, through the years 1815 and 1816. He appears to have now revisited his native village. It was at this period that he first came to Providence, travelling by stage with his comrade, Thomas Breese. They lodged at the house since known as the "Manufacturers Hotel." He passed the year 1815 mostly with the frigate, at Baltimore, Norfolk, New York, and other ports. War with England had ceased, and the frigate was ordered to the Mediterranean, to look after American interests, especially in connection with the Barbary States, and the threatening attitude of Algiers.

He sailed from Newport as surgeon of the *Java*, January 22, 1816, and reached the Straits of Gibraltar, February 12. On February 7, in a severe storm, several men were thrown from the masts and yards; some were killed, and others required surgical operations. In assisting to move them, Dr. Parsons was thrown between decks, breaking his right knee-pan. For this, he many years afterwards received a pension. His diary during this voyage of the *Java*, contained an account of his daily occupations, with full description of local customs and interesting places. He visited Gibraltar, Malaga, Port Mahon on the island of Minorca, Algiers, Tunis, and the ruins of Carthage, Tripoli, Messina, Palermo, and Naples. Perry gave his officers every proper facility for excursions on shore, which were often made by several of them in company.

On arriving at Algiers, April 1, they found the British fleet, under Lord Exmouth, which had gone there to secure the liberation of Christian slaves, and prevent future enslavement of captured citizens. The barbarous customs of piracy and the reduction of captives to servitude, and of demanding tribute from commercial nations, were beginning to call on that State the vengeance of the great Christian powers. In 1815, Decatur had secured by force of arms a treaty which relinquished claims to tribute from the United States, and released all American captives. Lord Exmouth now visited Algiers for a similar purpose. He obtained the release, by a large ransom, of several hundred Christian slaves mostly belonging to nations of Southern Europe. Dr. Parsons writes, April 7:—"The

British fleet departed for Tunis with Christian prisoners. They paid from five hundred to one thousand dollars per head for them, except a very few belonging to the British, which were not ransomed."

Misunderstanding arose between the Dey and Commodore Perry, and a fight was expected. Dr. Parsons writes, April 8: "Volunteered my services to go in Captain Perry's boat, and prepared both for fighting or doctoring."

In May, he set out from Messina to visit Mount Etna. The excursion occupied four days. He was accompanied by Dr. Hoffman, of the United States Navy. His diary describes the villages and ancient ruins that they passed,—the three regions, torrid, temperate and frigid,—the exhausting ascent of the great cone, and the grand view from its summit,—the sea, the flaming islands of Lipari, the varied landscape of Sicily, and the slopes of the mountain itself, its successive zones, its many villages, and its black rivers of solidified lava. From the village of Nicolosi, which is half-way up the mountain, he was accompanied by a local magistrate, who had never before visited the crater; and who, reading in an old French Gazetteer that Lima was in South America, inquired whether the United States were near that.

While at Naples, he examined repeatedly the remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

His journal of this voyage ends abruptly, at Naples, July 21. The Java revisited several ports on the Mediterranean, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Malaga and Gibraltar, and sailed in January, 1817, for the United States, bearing a new treaty with Algiers. The crew

suffered with the small pox on the homeward voyage. On the occurrence of the first case, the men were mustered, and it was found that eighteen of them had never had either small pox or kine pox. They were vaccinated, but with matter brought from the United States a year previously, and the vaccination failed. Dr. Parsons thereupon inoculated them with small pox virus, and all had the disease mildly. Some continued sick when the Java arrived in Newport, and the town authorities gave permission to "land a number of persons from on board the said ship, with the small pox, at Coasters' Harbor island."

The Java reached Newport, March 3, 1817. In July, Dr. Parsons came to Providence, bringing introductions from Commodore Perry and other naval friends, and contemplating a settlement there in civil practice. He resided there four months, boarding at the house of Major McClellan.*

In November, he went to attend lectures at the medical school, in Boston; and, in March, 1818, he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from Harvard University. His dissertation in graduating was on "the epidemic pneumonia of 1812-13, as it appeared about Lake Erie." In that year, he published in the New England Journal of Medicine and Surgery, a "surgical account of the naval battle on Lake Erie," and a report of two cases of gunshot wounds of the thorax.

*Major Samuel McClellan, a native of Woodstock, Connecticut, and a pensioner of the Revolutionary war, died in Providence, February 7, 1850, aged ninety. His house was for many years a resort of the most prominent lawyers, judges and politicians of Rhode Island, and was a scene of much original and entertaining talk. It stood on Benefit street, opposite the present rectory of St. John's church.

He joined the Massachusetts Medical Society at this time. His mother died at Alfred, on the 4th of July.

In July, 1818, he sailed from Boston as surgeon of the frigate *Guerrière*, Captain Thomas Macdonough, for St. Petersburg, carrying out Mr. George W. Campbell, minister to Russia. He spent about ten days in St. Petersburg, and wrote very full accounts of remarkable objects in that city, and of peculiar customs. The frigate sailed thence to the Mediterranean. He was at Copenhagen, October 14; off Cape Trafalgar, November 4; reached Syracuse in December, and spent several weeks at and near Messina. In April, 1819, the *Guerrière* left Messina for Palermo, and afterward sailed for Naples. My knowledge of this cruise is mostly obtained from letters to his correspondents in the United States. These show that he took an active and inquiring interest in a great variety of subjects; and I am tempted to quote freely from them. A few extracts must suffice.

The following letter was addressed to Dr. Jacob Bigelow, of Boston, then Professor of Materia Medica in Harvard University, and the only one of his correspondents of that period who still survives:—

“ PALERMO, May 8, 1819.

“ A few days since, I was favored with an introduction to the Professor of Botany and Materia Medica, and Director of the Royal Botanical Garden of Palermo. He took me through the college and botanical garden, and favored me with a particular description of everything pertaining to them. The college is a superb edifice, enclosed within the walls of the garden, and is furnished with books, prints, herbariums, &c. in abundance. In short, everything about this, as well as the garden, bears the impress of royal munificence. On entering

the library, he handed me a book and asked me if I knew the author. It was the *Flora Bostoniensis*, [written by Dr. Bigelow]. He was much gratified with my reply, as well as with one of your papers on the comparative forwardness of the seasons, which I had taken care to have in my pocket. He observed that he had hitherto been obliged to depend on the botanical gardens of England for all his American plants, but was now desirous of obtaining them direct from America, and asked if I would name his wishes to you.

“For the last six weeks our squadron has been in the harbor of Messina about one hundred miles from this. My opportunity for acquiring information of this sea has therefore been very limited. I have seen the other medical school of Sicily, at Catania, which is about as large and well conducted as the one at Palermo, there being about eighty students in each. We sail to-morrow for Naples, from which I shall visit Rome and Florence, and return home through France and England.”

At Palermo, he saw the telescope with which the first of the planetoids, Ceres, was discovered by Piazzi, on the first day of the present century. He remained at Naples a few weeks, and writes from there a long letter to Mr. John Pickering, of Salem, Massachusetts, in regard to books he had bought for his correspondent. He says:—

“A word respecting Pompeii, which I have visited four times, with increasing interest each time. Excavations are still carried on, and of all the disclosures of the city, about one-eighth have been made since I saw it in 1816. Then there had been three large excavations, each something more than an acre in extent, ranging in a direction obliquely across the city, and distant from each other about ten or twelve rods. Since that year, streets leading from one excavation to the other have been cleared out, with the houses on each side of them, so that you can now walk through the ancient city and

suburbs a distance of three-quarters of a mile, on the same pavements that the inhabitants did two thousand years since."

From Naples, the cruise was continued along the Barbary coast to Gibraltar, arriving there in the middle of June. He there received permission from Commodore Charles Stewart, dated United States ship Franklin, Gibraltar, July 15, 1819, to leave the *Guerrière* on account of ill health, and "return to America, or make a trial of the air of the north of Europe." He thus writes:—

"My reasons for leaving the squadron are, that the Mediterranean climate disagrees with my health, on account of the heat and confined air of a berth-deck; and secondly, because I am very desirous of making the tour of Europe for the purpose of professional improvement, and do not expect to meet with another opportunity so favorable as the present; lastly, I am so exceedingly tired of the monotonous scenery of a man-o'-war, of the perpetual jarrings that occur, and of the restrictions that are imposed on officers, that a change seemed desirable for the health of the mind as well as body."

He left Gibraltar July 20, and went as passenger to Leghorn. He then visited Pisa, in company with Captain Macdonough. He journeyed thence to Lucca and Florence. He examined the medical institution in the University of Pisa, and took great delight in anatomical preparations in wax at Florence. He thence went by carriage to Rome, and there passed some days, visiting the hospitals as well as the objects of general interest.* From Rome he embarked, Sep-

* I find little of interest in his notes at Rome, unless the following: "The present season a steamboat, with appropriate machinery, was ploughing up the bed of the Tiber, but I did not learn that anything was found."

tember 6, in a small schooner for Leghorn, having only “the hard deck for a feather bed and without any covering; nor would any other have been of service, on account of millions of fleas in the vessel.” The voyage along the Tuscan shore was very uncomfortable. At a small unnamed port, “was called on to see an aged female afflicted with partial blindness, and another with fever. A jolly old bacchanalian is physician to about twenty soldiers who are stationed here, and to the few inhabitants. He professed great veneration for the Brunonian system of medicine, and his bloated face indicated the sincerity of his faith, though his apparel gave him the appearance of a Shakspeare’s apothecary.” He arrived in Leghorn, September 10.

He then journeyed through Genoa, Nice, Aix, Avignon and Lyons to Paris, arriving there September 29. He thus writes to Dr. Lyman Spalding:—

“PARIS, November 29.

“Having been pretty busily engaged for two or three months in attending hospitals and medical schools, I have thought it probable you might feel some curiosity to know how I have found them. These establishments are so numerous and employ so many lecturers and professors that a stranger at first sight would believe the attention of the whole city is directed toward them. I have attended the lectures of some whose names are familiar to you, particularly Dubois, Boyer, Dupuytren, Richerand, Alibert and Larrey on surgery,—Vauquelin, Chaptal, Gay Lussac, Thenard and Abbe Haüy on chemistry. It is difficult to determine which surgeon to rank first, Dubois, Boyer or Dupuytren. The two first are older and consequently more experienced, but Dupuytren has been at the head of Hotel Dieu for several years, and during the time has performed more operations than all the other surgeons in Paris. I am willing to acknowledge him

the best operator I have yet seen, although I think very highly of the other two and of Larrey. * * * * Larrey is surgeon of the hospital of the king's guards, which is but a small establishment. An opinion prejudicial to him prevails, that he is too fond of cutting,—that he has frequently amputated where it was not necessary. Medical gentlemen are permitted to see his patients every Thursday, when he gives a particular history of every case, and performs some operations. The last time I was there, I took the liberty of introducing myself to him, which he gave me no reason to regret doing; he inquired about hospitals in the United States. I have found the people here very ignorant of the state of medical science with us, and yet very desirous to be better informed. This circumstance has induced me to supply one of the journals with a short description of our contemplated Dispensatory. I have had the honor of becoming acquainted with Drs. Swediaur, Pinel and Cuvier. The two former are far advanced in life, and the latter is now turning politician."

In another place, he writes:—

"Cuvier has exchanged natural history for politics; he has lately been erected a peer, and is a leading ultra royalist, as well as a noisy one. The liberals have enrolled his name in the list of political weathercocks, or among those who have turned at every change of government in France. Cuvier still holds a professorship, and continues his residence in the Garden of Plants, and gives a weekly levee in imitation of Sir Joseph Banks, to which all strangers are invited.

"Sir Humphrey Davy passed through here not long since, on his way to Naples, to unroll the Herculaneum manuscripts. While here he examined the chemical laboratory, with other things connected with his scientific pursuits; but Englishman-like, as the French say, he turned up his nose at everything. Every object they offered for his inspection, he considered as unimportant, or said it was borrowed from England."

The following are extracts from his note book, entitled, "Surgical notes and observations made in dif-

ferent cities in Europe, particularly in Paris and London," in which he gives short accounts of hospitals and medical schools in Palermo, Messina, Naples, Florence, Pisa, Genoa and Nice:—

"La Charite (Paris; October 13.) Went through the wards with Boyer, his son-in-law, Roux, and about thirty students. Saw nothing but bad ulcers and those badly managed. The French surgeons are neither neat, scientific nor successful in their treatment of ulcers, wounds, &c. They rarely attempt to heal by the first intention; even in amputations below the knee, the first surgeons are in the habit of stuffing the stump with lint to prevent its closing by the approximation of the skin of the opposite sides. This practice is condemned in England and must ere long be in France." In regard to inhumanity and disregard of life, and the practice of poulticing inflamed limbs, he also severely criticises the hospital surgeons of Paris.

"Larrey's manner of operating is pleasing. He uses the knife adroitly and gracefully, and is neat in his dressings. He is humane and solacing in his behavior to the patients, differing in this respect very much from Dupuytren, whose behavior to them is savage. This is the more remarkable when it is considered that D. has always been in civil life, while L. has always been in military practice where sympathy and fine sensibilities are less known. Their stature is much alike, both being very stout and very stately in their appearance. Larrey is very ready and pertinent in his remarks."

"November 11. Went early to the hospital Salpetriere to attend the physician in his rounds. Enquired for M. Pinel, who is physician-in-chief and at the head of the institution, and sent in to him my address, with a request that I might accompany him through the hospital. He invited me into his study, and after some enquiries about American hospitals, &c., we made a tour first through three large wards full of women past sixty years of age, and who were ill. After prescribing for these, we visited the lunatic apartments in which

are women in every state of mental disorder, from slight melancholy to furious mania. Those of the latter description were many of them chained, and others shut up in prisons.

* * * I found in this instance, that introducing myself to the professor had as good if not better effect than a letter would have had."

He bought many medical books and instruments in Paris. Among these was Laennec's treatise on auscultation, with a stethoscope of the original pattern, now a curiosity of medical history, and certified to have been "examined and used by Laennec."

Among other acquaintances formed in Paris, was that of a genial and accomplished Englishman, Mr. William Clift, a pupil and connection of the great British physiologist and surgeon, John Hunter. This acquaintance, renewed in London, ripened into a life-long friendship with Mr. Clift and his family, including his son-in-law, Professor Richard Owen, the eminent comparative anatomist. These friends corresponded with Dr. Parsons for many years, and their kindness was continued to his relatives and to visitors whom he sometimes introduced to them by letter.

He went from Paris to London, arriving there December 4, and remaining till Christmas. In those three weeks he became acquainted with many of the most eminent surgeons and savans of London, Sir Astley Cooper, Abernethy, and others. He attended the levee of Sir Joseph Banks. He breakfasted with Sir Astley Cooper, but found him pressed with business. He gave considerable attention to the Hunterian Museum at the college of surgeons, and contemplated the formation of a museum of anatomy founded on a

principle suggested to him there, viz. : that of bringing together specimens of corresponding organs and sets of organs from as many as possible of the different classes and orders of the animal kingdom. He attended two meetings of the Royal Society. Beside the usual sight-seeing, he saw Kean play Hamlet at Drury-lane, and heard a debate in the House of Lords, by Russell, Castlereagh and others, on the subject of "rotten boroughs," and the expediency of admitting representation from large manufacturing towns in the House of Commons. The following extracts are from his diary in London:—

"December 9. Examined the Museum of the College of Surgeons. This collection is calculated for physiological purposes alone. Every organ of the animal machine is exhibited in as great a variety of animals as they have hitherto been able to collect. The separate organs are preserved in spirit, and are arranged from those of the most simple to those of the most complex structure. The museum begins with the simple muscular fibre, rectilinear; then follow single and double penniform muscles, sphincters, &c. Then the organs of digestion and assimilation, beginning with the stomachs of all sorts of animals; then the various organs of mastication," &c., &c.

"20. Went to St. Bartholomew's, and heard Mr. Abernethy lecture on organic diseases of the heart to about three hundred pupils, the most interesting lecture I almost ever heard. His manner is peculiar, and the most engaging and amusing as well as impressive I ever heard. Dr. Mason, of New York, makes somewhat such a figure in the pulpit as Mr. Abernethy does here. He is full of illustrative anecdotes which he tells with such a quaintness as to make one laugh. He is about fifty years old, of middle stature, head powdered, dressed in black."

He sailed from Liverpool, December 28, in a merchant vessel, and reached Boston early in 1820. He was ordered in May to service at the marine barracks in Charlestown. While holding this appointment, he resided much of the time at Cambridge, enjoying opportunities of study and mingling in the learned society of that place. It was at this time, and through the influence of acquaintances gained in Cambridge, that he realized his youthful dream of being appointed teacher of anatomy, which he appears never to have given up since the year 1809. In August, 1820, he was chosen Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in Dartmouth college. He wrote at the time: "Dr. Parsons's motive for engaging in lecturing is a desire to establish a museum of anatomy, human and comparative, on the plan of the late John Hunter's." He contributed a number of preparations, some of them in wax, which he had bought in his last visit to Europe. But he lectured there only one year.

At this time, he published at Cambridge the "Sailor's Physician," a medical guide for use on merchant vessels. This was extensively sold: changed its name to that of "Physician for Ships," and passed through five editions, undergoing various revisions and improvements. The four subsequent editions appeared in the years 1824, 1842, 1851 and 1867.

In December, 1820, he left Boston to visit the medical schools of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. He heard lectures from Drs. Hosack, Post, Francis and Mott, in New York, and Physick, Chapman, and others in Philadelphia. A fragment of diary still preserved, shows his views of these eminent professors.

He introduced himself to them as surgeon in the navy. His observations show that he was intent on preparing himself for anatomical teaching. The following extract may be worth preserving:—

“December 31. Breakfasted with Dr. Hosack. Examined his anatomical museum, which is small. His study is an octagon with a dome of light, and is filled with a choice and very large collection of books. He has a very small private study for the reception of patients. In this he has a small library. On one of the shelves is an elegant volume of Thomas’s Practice, dedicated to Hosack, which I had heard he always took pleasure in showing; and to gratify his humor, I anticipated his putting it into my hands by taking it down and asking what work it was. I at once saw what I had often heard, that he took a heartfelt satisfaction in perching upon this book to crow.”

In April, 1822, Dr. Parsons began his long residence in Providence. He was for a while partner in medical practice with Dr. Levi Wheaton. He married, September 23, Mary Jackson Holmes, daughter of Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D., of Cambridge, Massachusetts, author of “The Annals of America.” She died, June 14, 1825, leaving one son. In April, 1823, he resigned his commission in the navy.

A plan of giving lectures in Brown University, which had failed in 1817, was resumed in 1822. A medical school then existed at this institution; and Dr. Parsons was appointed Professor of Anatomy and Surgery.* Beside lecturing to the medical students,

* His associates were Drs. Levi Wheaton, Professor of Theory and Practice of Physic and Obstetrics; John DeWolf, Professor of Chemistry; Solomon Drowne, Professor of Materia Medica and Botany.

he gave a short annual course to the higher classes of undergraduates. In 1826, he published an introductory lecture on Anatomy and Physiology as branches of general education. The policy of President Wayland, requiring the officers of instruction to be also officers of discipline and give their whole time to collegiate duties, necessarily severed his connection with the University. His special interest in anatomy, awakened in his youth by the lectures of Dr. Ramsay, continued through his whole active life. In 1831, he published at Philadelphia a volume, mostly compiled, on the "Art of making Anatomical Preparations."

From the time of the death of his wife till the year 1831, he boarded at McClellan's. In 1832, he built a one-story office of three rooms on President, now Waterman street. This he afterward enlarged, and occupied till his death. Until the marriage of his son, in 1853, he had no home-establishment, but took his meals at hotels or boarding-houses, and generally slept in his office. He liked the freedom of this way of living. During the last fifteen years of his life, he had a home with his son.

He rose gradually to a very prominent rank in his profession. Beside his varied opportunities, which brought him to the beginning of civil practice with more than usual experience and resources, he had many qualities of body and mind that fitted him for medical life. He was robust, with uncommon powers of endurance, and a frame strengthened by labor in early life. He was industrious, persevering, ambitious and social; faithful in attendance and considerate in his charges. His early training in naval service, and

the predominance of the reflective powers, fitted him rather for the office of consulting physician, and for cases of exceptional difficulty, than for the ordinary run of daily medical practice. He had not that easy tact, that quickness of thought and command of language and features, which were conspicuous in some of his contemporaries. Yet in many families of refinement and education, his acquirements were appreciated, and his ready sympathies and sound judgment made him a trusted adviser and friend. As consulting physician and surgeon, he was very widely known in Rhode Island and neighboring parts of other states. For many years, a large part of his practice was out of Providence. He was a fast driver, and, before railroads were multiplied, his sulky was well known on the roads leading from Providence in all directions.

His naval experience had turned his attention particularly to surgery. In European hospitals, he appears to have observed surgical cases almost exclusively. As an operator, he was more marked by caution than dexterity, and was particularly methodical in the preparation and arrangement of instruments and dressings. He used to point out the house in Smithfield where he first operated for strangulated hernia, in 1823. Being little acquainted with the operation, he studied it up, perhaps in Scarpa's treatise which he had bought in Paris, while the messenger was conveying him to the house. In the *American Journal of Medical Sciences*, 1848, he published a summary of his large surgical operations. He reports fifteen cases of herniotomy, with eleven recoveries. He performed lithotomy only once, and successfully, on a patient in

Apponaug, aged seventy-four. He tied the common carotid artery for a supposed tumor in the brain, producing intense headache and total blindness: the symptoms were relieved, but returned, and ended in death. He extirpated the eye-ball, with the lachrymal gland and much of the other textures in the orbit, as was then the common practice, instead of the milder process of enucleation. He operated frequently for cataract. He was at one time much interested in the surgical treatment of deformities, and performed tenotomy often. He contrived and used with fair success an apparatus for securing union in cases of cleft palate.

It was only in the latter part of his professional career that he enjoyed the advantages of etherization in surgery. He never became so fully at home with it as the later generation of surgeons. In the greater part of his operations, the only anæsthetics at his command were such as laudanum and brandy, and the words of encouragement and sympathy.

While in active practice, he gave a great deal of attention to private pupils in medicine, having often several at a time, and more than fifty in all. He very commonly had private dissecting classes in winter.

After becoming well established in practice, Dr. Parsons allowed himself more liberty in regard to absence from Providence, than is usual with equally busy physicians. In the autumn of 1843, he visited Europe for the third time, contemplating a journey to Egypt, but going no farther than Paris, where his son was studying medicine. He spent some days in London on his outward journey, renewing his acquaintance with Mr. Clift, and attending a meeting of the Geo-

logical Society, where he saw Dr. Buckland, whose Bridgewater Treatise he had read with great interest. In Paris, he frequented the hospitals, and took copious notes of surgical cases, as he had done twenty-four years earlier. A few extracts from his diary, show the character of his observations:—

“There is to my mind an unaccountable aversion on the part of French surgeons to attempt uniting wounds after operations, by the first intention. To-day, the flaps made in the amputation might have been brought together, a depending opening left, and the whole or nearly all the wound closed; instead of which the old system in vogue twenty-three years ago is continued, of stuffing the wound with *charpie* or lint.

“There is in French surgeons an indifference to life that seems inhuman. They operate when they should not;—when they must know that the advantages to be gained are not to be compared with the risk of life, and the certain amount of severe pain that must be suffered from the operation.”

He bought several valuable instruments and anatomical preparations in Paris. He also bought a copy of Josephus, printed by Schüssler at Augsburg, 1470;* and the “Annals of the World’s History,” printed by Walch at Venice, 1479, and adorned with wood-cuts representing the tower of Babel, Nineveh, Solomon’s temple, &c. He was in Paris from November 19, 1843, till February 19, 1844, when he set out for London. He there received polite attentions from Mr. Richard Owen, Bransby Cooper, Mr. South, Dr. John Forbes, and other distinguished surgeons and men of science, visited the largest hospitals, and attended a meeting of the Royal Society. He left London, March 8, for

* See “History of the Art of Printing,” by H. Noel Humphreys; London, 1868; page 102.

Liverpool, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Returning to Liverpool, he there passed several days in the agreeable society of some old American friends, and sailed April 4, bearing dispatches from the minister, Mr. Everett. He arrived in Providence, April 22, 1844.

Dr. Parsons joined the Rhode Island Medical Society, in 1823. In 1837, he was elected President of the society for three years, without having passed through the usual stages of vice-presidency. He was a constant attendant at its meetings, and contributed several papers to its transactions. These were mostly on strictly medical subjects. One had a semi-historical character. In 1859, a committee was appointed to prepare sketches of eminent deceased physicians of Rhode Island; and Dr. Parsons, as its chairman, compiled from various sources a pamphlet on this subject. It contains notices of nearly forty physicians who lived on the island of Rhode Island, mostly in Newport; of the Bowens and others in Providence, and the north part of the State: and longer articles, contributed by other writers to the chairman, on Drs. Levi Wheaton, Solomon Drowne, Peter and William Turner, Charles Eldredge, Edmund T. Waring and David King,—all deceased.

His latest printed communication to this society, was a "Letter on some points of military Surgery," read December 19, 1860; and reciting some of his experience on the great lakes. This paper would appear to have been suggested by the anticipation of civil war.

When the American Medical Association was organized in Philadelphia, in 1847, Dr. Parsons was present as delegate, and took an active part. In writing of the receptions then held, he says: "It was gratifying

to me to find whenever I introduced myself to any stranger,—which I did a dozen times this evening,—as Dr. Parsons of Rhode Island, they all called me at once by my christian name, having read of my writings through journals.” For many years he attended the annual meetings of this association, successively in Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Charleston, Richmond, New York, St. Louis and Philadelphia. In 1848, he was appointed chairman of a committee on adulterated drugs; and, in 1849, chairman of the committee on medical sciences. His report on this last subject contains a summary of the “progress of American Medicine during the year.” In 1853, at New York, he was elected first Vice-President. In 1854, at St. Louis, he acted in the place of President at the early part of the meeting, and as such delivered the opening address; the President, the late Dr. Jonathan Knight of New Haven, being unable to attend.

He was honorary member of the medical societies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey and South Carolina.

Dr. Parsons was an industrious writer on professional subjects. He wrote frequently for the premiums instituted by Ward N. Boylston, Esq., of Massachusetts, and awarded by a committee appointed by the corporation of Harvard University, for dissertations on “medical, anatomical, physiological and chymical subjects.” Four of these prizes were awarded to him, viz.: for dissertations on Periostitis, 1827; on Eneuresis Irritata, 1828; on “the connection between cutaneous diseases which are not contagious, and the internal organs,” 1830; and on Cancer of the Breast, 1835.

The other subject proposed for the year 1830, was the comparative influence of animal and vegetable decomposition in producing fever. The premium for the best dissertation on this subject was awarded to Dr. Charles Caldwell, of Kentucky; but Dr. Parsons's essay on the subject was highly praised by the committee, with a wish that it might be published, and its author's name made known. He also received the Fiske Fund premium in Rhode Island, in 1842, for an essay on Spinal Diseases. These six papers were published in a volume. He contributed numerous articles to different medical journals.

In 1831, he was appointed Professor of Obstetrics in Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, and lectured there the following winter. Some valuable models for illustrating these lectures were lost at sea, on their way for Philadelphia. The subject was one for which his experience had not particularly qualified him. He did not afterward accept any appointment which would require him to reside away from Providence.

Dr. Parsons had long been impressed with the need of a general hospital in Providence. The following account of his agency in an effort to found one, which failed at the time, was written by him in 1863, and is believed to be substantially correct as far as it goes:—

“Public attention was first awakened to the importance of establishing a general hospital in Providence, by the medical association of that city. At one of its stated meetings, held October 6, 1851, its President, Dr. Usher Parsons, introduced the subject for consideration, and recommended its reference to a committee of seven of the senior members of the associa-

tion. The committee appointed consisted of Drs. U. Parsons, chairman, Joseph Mauran, L. L. Miller, R. Brownell, George Capron, S. A. Arnold and Charles W. Fabyan. At the next monthly meeting, said committee reported that it was expedient to prepare a circular to present to every citizen whose property was assessed for the payment of taxes of more than one hundred dollars, which circular should set forth the nature and amount of suffering and destitution that called loudly for hospital relief.

“ This circular was distributed widely, but awakened little or no interest in the desired object.

“ In 1852, the association recommended to try a subscription paper, which was presented to some of the leading citizens of Providence, but the project failed, no one seeming inclined to head the list. Strongly impressed by the sight of suffering daily witnessed in their professional walks, the association next directed the chairman to draft and present a petition to the city government, asking its aid and co-operation in devising some measures for relief, and to be handed to numerous citizens for their signature. This was accordingly done in the following language:—

“ The undersigned beg leave respectfully to represent that there exists in this city great need of a hospital; that cases of sickness and of wounds are frequently occurring in which destitution is added to painful suffering; that no provision exists either for subsistence or surgical aid for persons injured on railroads, in factories, at fires, in blasting rocks and various other ways; that many sick prefer to endure privation in ill-ventilated apartments and crowded garrets and cellars, to being crowded into the Dexter Asylum, there to mingle with foreign paupers, many of them the victims of debauchery; that in many chronic cases patients are driven from our city to the hospitals of Boston and New York, whose expenses there for board would, if accommodated here, contribute to the support of a hospital, and themselves be relieved of travelling expenses and distant separation from friends and families; that no city of the population and wealth of Providence, has deferred so long a time to provide a public hospital;

and finally, that the medical association of Providence have humanely tendered their services gratuitously as physicians and surgeons in such an establishment, whenever they are needed.

“In view of these facts, we respectfully beg leave to recommend that a hospital be provided by the city, to be sustained by private subscriptions, and would suggest that the Tockwotten estate seems eligibly situated and in every respect well adapted for the purpose; and that its present occupants would be better accommodated on a larger lot, distant from the city, where agricultural employments might be added to those now in use. In conclusion, we hope that you will appropriate this or some other suitable place for a hospital, on condition that fifty thousand dollars be raised by private subscription for defraying current expenses. All which is respectfully submitted. Signed, USHER PARSONS, *Chairman.*’

“The city government on receiving the petition and with it a request from the committee for permission to address them orally, granted the request and appointed a committee to meet them and examine the facts in the case. There arose a difference of opinion among them, some preferring the Tockwotten estate, and others the old hospital lot. On account of this disagreement, all further action for the present ceased.

“Within the last year, Captain Thomas P. Ives, now commanding the United States flotilla in the Chesapeake bay, called on the chairman of the hospital committee, with a petition to the legislature for an act of incorporation of a Rhode Island hospital, which he wished to have signed by the same persons that were appointed by the Providence Medical Association in 1851. He represented that his late father, Moses B. Ives, Esq., had bequeathed towards the founding of a hospital, forty thousand dollars, to which sum ten thousand more would be added. This noble bequest was hailed by the association with joyful gratitude. The legislature granted a liberal charter, and the city of Providence soon gave for the hospital a large and appropriate lot, estimated to be worth

fifty thousand dollars. A subscription was started and the sums subscribed in the aggregate, exceeded the most sanguine anticipations of the friends of the enterprise.

“At an adjourned meeting of the hospital committee of the association, held on the 12th day of May, 1863, the charter granted by the legislature was read and adopted. It was then proposed to enlarge the list of corporators, by the addition of names of such persons as would be likely to favor the hospital enterprise, and accordingly two hundred names were added, mostly non-professional gentlemen. The meeting was adjourned to the 21st instant, when Dr. Parsons, on taking the chair, formally resigned his place as chairman, and nominated Governor James Y. Smith, for permanent chairman of the corporation.”

When the Rhode Island Hospital was organized, he gave one thousand dollars to it. He followed the progress of the undertaking with great interest, though he was then withdrawn from medical practice. He gave about three hundred volumes to its library, and bequeathed it one hundred dollars by will. He was at first appointed at the head of its consulting staff.

Dr. Parsons had too active a mind to rest satisfied with the knowledge required for every-day medical practice. He investigated many subjects more or less connected with his professional studies. When the doctrine called Phrenology, was presented in Boston, graced by the zeal and eloquence of Spurzheim, Dr. Parsons gave much attention to it. Dr. Jonathan Barber gave a course of phrenological lectures in Providence; and Dr. Parsons followed him in a short course, illustrated by many crania and models, describing the anatomy of the brain, and concurring in the general principles of Phrenology, but opposing the extravagant claims of the so-called science.

In 1837, he obtained a charter for the Rhode Island Natural History Society, of which he was chosen the first President. It held several meetings, and made some collections, but never attained the position of a working scientific society. He kept up the practice of collecting specimens. He purchased and read the geological works of Buckland, Hitchcock and others. He had some knowledge of field-botany, and occasionally gave private courses of botanical lectures to classes of young ladies.

In 1831, he prepared an address on Temperance, which he delivered in Providence and other places, and which was afterward published. In 1840, he lectured before the American Institute of Instruction, at its meeting in Providence, on the connection and reciprocal influence of the brain and stomach. In this as in other addresses partaking of a physiological character, he dwelt much on the doctrines of Bichat, whose treatise, "*Sur la Vie et la Mort*," had made a great impression on his mind, and was habitually recommended by him to his medical pupils.

His reading on subjects not connected with physical science was mostly in works of history and travel. He took little interest in purely imaginative literature. He read few of the classical novels. A special interest in the remains of Pompeii, which he had carefully examined when cruising on the Mediterranean, led him to buy and read Bulwer's "*Last Days of Pompeii*." In poetry, his favorites were Thomson and Young. He often read through the "*Seasons*," as the seasons came round; and was equally familiar with the "*Night Thoughts*." He selected the opening lines of

this poem, for his son to speak at a school declamation when less than ten years old; and it will be readily believed that they were not very intelligently or impressively uttered. He was also a regular reader of the Bible. Beside frequent recurrence to certain favorite parts, especially in the Psalms, he went through the Bible in course, with probably some omissions, four times in the last thirty years of his life. He thus wrote in his note book, November, 1837:—

“I have this day finished the Old Testament, which I began in June, 1831. I cannot but think that the Christian religion would gain by excluding some of the books. Two-thirds of what follows the first chapter of Jeremiah might be omitted, and all of Solomon’s Song. These writings of the Prophets might be transferred to the Apocrypha, or incorporated into a separate division of the Bible, and considered as elegies on the woes prepared by Divine Power to bring upon this ill-fated people the Jews. The Bible, after such an exclusion, would be read more generally, intelligibly and thoroughly than it is while encumbered with such a mass of matter so irrelevant to subsequent ages of the world. As a rule of life, and a history of God’s government and the plan of salvation, an abridged volume might be formed for general circulation, which would embrace all that is essential. I shall now commence reading Tyndall’s New Testament with notes.”

His ecclesiastical relations were peculiar. He was brought up in congregational worship and the faith of the Puritans.* Soon after his marriage, he was admitted to the Episcopal communion, at St. John’s Church. In later years, he had a seat in one place of

* His grandfather, the minister of Bradford, was suspected of Arminianism. Whether any traditionary influence, inherited from him, softened the rigor of Calvinistic belief in the family of his son William, I do not know.

worship after another,—St. John's, the First Baptist. St. Stephen's (now Church of the Saviour) and the Central Congregational church. For the last twelve years of his life, the latter was his usual place of attendance on Sundays, and the only one where he owned a pew, though he frequently partook of the communion of the Episcopal church. He often went to other churches, especially the Unitarian under the ministry of Dr. Edward B. Hall, whose preaching he much admired. After hearing him on Thanksgiving Day, 1853, he wrote in his note book: "I wish he and other Unitarians would follow after St. Paul's example, and preach a little more about Christ and him crucified. At the same time, I wish the Orthodox would preach more practical sermons, and not be forever harping on particular doctrines of the Calvinistic order." In his busiest years of practice, he was remarkably regular in attending church once or twice on Sunday.

He seldom took an active part in politics. He voted with the whig party in the day of it. The nomination of General Harrison for President awakened a special interest in him, on account of the general's connection with Commodore Perry and the service on Lake Erie. Dr. Parsons wrote several newspaper articles in favor of Harrison, which were widely reprinted, and spoke on the same subject in the old town house. October 19, 1840. He was appointed messenger to carry the electoral vote of Rhode Island to Washington, and handed the package of votes to Vice-President Richard M. Johnson. When the suffrage troubles arose in Rhode Island, he did not share in the attachment felt by many natives of this State, to the charter of 1663, and his

sympathies were with the movement for enlarged suffrage. Mr. Thomas W. Dorr was his intimate friend. But when the affair took on a revolutionary character, he rallied to the support of the existing government. He acted as volunteer surgeon of the Marine Artillery. The subsequent imprisonment of Mr. Dorr was exceedingly distasteful to him. He exerted himself to procure his release, by circulating petitions, &c. ; but his course did not suit the uncompromising views of Mr. Dorr, and was unavailing. Immediately after the passage of the act of liberation, he visited Mr. Dorr as physician and friend.

On the outbreak of civil war, in 1861, he offered his services as surgeon, in a letter to Governor Sprague. He was commissioned, in June, 1861, surgeon of the Providence Horse Guards. He followed the varying fortunes of the conflict with intense interest. At the time of the presidential election, in 1868, his last illness had begun ; he had been confined to the house sixteen days, and walked with difficulty, leaning on his son's arm. The warden came down from the ward room, and met him in the lower entry, where a chair had been arranged, and he gave his last vote, for Grant and Colfax.

From an early age, he was interested in tracing the history and genealogy of his family. Till the year 1834, he did not correctly follow up the line beyond his great grandfather, Rev. Joseph Parsons, of Salisbury. In that year, he carried on a lively correspondence with the eminent antiquary of Northampton, Sylvester Judd, Esq. Mr. Judd's valuable letters are now before me. They helped him to connect Joseph

Parsons, of Salisbury, with the first Joseph, of Springfield, and the second Joseph, of Northampton. He explored old graveyards, records and all written sources of genealogical lore. He visited the towns where his ancestors had lived, talked with the old men of those places, and treasured up the knowledge he had learned from their trembling lips. A manuscript book is still preserved, in which he wrote out the history of the families of Parsons, Frost, Usher, &c., with sketches of the lives of individuals, and preserved autographs of many.* In 1838, he printed on a sheet an outline of the "Genealogy of the Family of Joseph Parsons."

In 1849, he prepared a somewhat elaborate memoir of Major Charles Frost, his great great grandfather, who was a man of some importance in civil and military affairs, and was killed by the Indians in Kittery, now

* These fac-similes are from autographs contained in that book.

Joseph Parsons (1)

Joseph Parsons (2)

Charles Frost; maj

Elliot, July 4, 1697. This was published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, July, 1849. It was founded on materials drawn from old manuscripts obtained in Maine, especially the voluminous papers left by Frost's son-in-law, Captain John Hill, who commanded Fort Mary at Saco, from 1693 to 1700. It contains, from the original in his possession, the account of Major Frost's death, written to Captain Hill by Joseph Storer, who was another son-in-law of Major Frost. Dr. Parsons afterward prepared a genealogy of the Frost family, and an account of "the descendants of Peter Hill, of York county, Maine, with some incidents relating to the French and Indian wars," founded on the same Hill papers.

His most important literary undertaking, the "Life of Sir William Pepperrell," sprang originally out of his genealogical studies. He began to prepare for this task in the year 1846, but suspended it on learning that Pepperrell's life would be written by others. The principal exploit of Pepperrell, in heading the attack on the French fortified town of Louisburg, in 1745, and reducing it after a siege of forty-eight days, had been fully described by Belknap and other historians. But no extended memoir of Pepperrell had been published. Rev. Dr. Charles Burroughs, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Hon. Lorenzo Sabine, of Framingham, Massachusetts, had both prepared sketches of his life. A connection of the family, Colonel George Sparhawk, of Kittery, where Pepperrell's mansion still stood, had talked of writing his biography, and was known to have a great many of his papers, which had lain neglected in a shed or fish-

house on the estate, till Colonel Sparhawk selected and arranged the more valuable documents. It was after correspondence with these gentlemen and many others, that Dr. Parsons determined to carry out the undertaking. He read the state and local histories bearing on his subject, examined the papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society and other public places of deposit, and procured documents from all available sources. The Sparhawk papers, after some negotiation, reached his hands in January, 1851, through the kind offices of Mr. John Blunt, of New York. For four years after that, he gave much of his leisure to this work.

Not satisfied with studying the details of Pepperrell's career in its written and printed records, Dr. Parsons visited the harbor and ruins of Louisburg, in August, 1852, in company with his nephew, Edwin Parsons, Esq., now of New York. They took the English steamer from Boston to Halifax, and then a small steamboat to Sidney, driving thence to Louisburg. An account of his observations there is given in the *Life of Pepperrell*, at page 332.

At the beginning of the year 1855, his book was essentially completed, and had been submitted to the friendly criticism of several historical scholars, especially Hon. Mr. Sabine before mentioned, and J. Wingate Thornton, Esq., of Boston. It was published in May. It was very favorably received by students of colonial history, both in America and England, and was kindly noticed and somewhat copiously analyzed in the leading newspapers and magazines of this country, and in the *London Athenæum*. The subject,

being ante-revolutionary, was alike interesting in the mother country, where several descendants of Pepperrell still exist, and in America. It was republished in London, in 1856.

Most of the reviews of this book consist mainly of the analysis of its contents, and are hardly fitted to extract from. I will only reprint a few sentences from a discourse, hereafter to be mentioned, delivered before the Rhode Island Historical Society, by its President, Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, the author of the "History of Rhode Island":—

"This work is a very important contribution to our colonial history. The conqueror of Louisburg was one of the foremost men that America has produced. A merchant of vast wealth, whose landed possessions alone extended thirty miles from the Piscataqua to Saco, acquired by his own skill and industry; a soldier whose genius was attested by success in capturing the stronghold of France from its powerful defenders; a civilian whose talents were everywhere admitted to be of the highest order. Sir William Pepperrell was the only native of New England who was created a baronet during our colonial period. The eclat of the war of Independence, has dimmed the fame of the great names of ante-revolutionary days, and whoever aids to rescue from oblivion the achievements and the characters of the mighty men of the past, confers a favor upon humanity, and adds an enduring page to the volume of history. This Dr. Parsons has done in the memoir of his illustrious ancestor. * * * To revive the memory of these school-days of the republic, and to bring before us the men who led in that era of our national pupilage, and who formed the mind and trained the muscle of the growing state, is a pious duty which Dr. Parsons has well performed."

He left in manuscript a history of his native town of Alfred. When a celebration of the hundredth

anniversary of the settlement of that town was contemplated, in 1860, he was asked to prepare a historical discourse, but declined on account of impaired health.

For many years, he interested himself in studying the remains, language and customs of the aborigines of this part of our country. The first record I have of his meeting with Indians, is in the diary of his march from Albany to Buffalo, in 1812. He there writes, October 7, being on the route between Vernon and Whitestown:—

“Passed by the Oneida tribe of Indians, consisting of about two thousand souls. The warriors have volunteered their services to assist in prosecuting the war against Canada. Their dress is a shirt which does not extend the length of the trunk, a cloth pinned around the waist, and extending over perhaps a fourth part of the lower extremities, a pair of broadcloth leggins, moccasins, and a blanket thrown over the body. Their huts are one room, in which are one bench, kettle, pail, dish and samp-mortar. The tribe have two schools attended by all the children, and a church. The conversation of the warriors I could understand, but not of the squaws. This difference may be imputed to the circumstance that the warriors have more intercourse with the white people.”

In his rides extending many miles around Providence, he examined the Indian burying-grounds, and gradually made a collection of bones and various utensils, such as hatchets, arrow-heads, pots of soap-stone, &c. He recorded the Indian names of localities, with the meanings that had been assigned them by tradition or by guess. In 1840, he furnished a barrel-full of skulls, from an aboriginal burying-place in Wash-

ington county, to Dr. Samuel G. Morton, of Philadelphia, author of "*Crania Americana*."

After his principal historical work was published, and when he was about seventy years old, he began to collate and arrange his notes on Indian localities in Rhode Island. He made new researches on this subject, and by examination of various maps, of historical works relating to Rhode Island, and old records, collected many new names, with supposed explanations of some. At length, in 1861, he published a pamphlet of thirty-two pages, entitled "*Indian Names of Places in Rhode Island*." It contains more than three hundred titles; but some of the names are repeated in different applications: thus, the name *Pettaquamscot* recurs as given to a river, a tract of land, and a rock. There are a few repetitions from inadvertence, sometimes concealed by an unimportant variation in spelling. In a preface he says:—

"No attempt is herein made, by the author, to examine Indian names of places as a philologist or grammarian, but merely to gather such as were in existence when civilization commenced within the State of Rhode Island, according to its present boundary; and, in a few instances, give the meaning or derivation of the word used. I was led to this enterprise, partly for the amusement it might afford in my leisure hours, but more for the purpose of rescuing from oblivion names of places in use among the aborigines, and for the convenience of those who may hereafter wish to apply them to their country villas, factories or institutions, as has often been done in this and other states."

As early as the year 1841, he visited the Indian burying-ground and old fort in Charlestown, Rhode Island, and made some examination of Indian graves.

He went there several times in subsequent years, procured various Indian relics, wrote out descriptions of the places, and took part in some attempts at disinterment. In 1860, and again in 1861, he made these entries in his diary:—

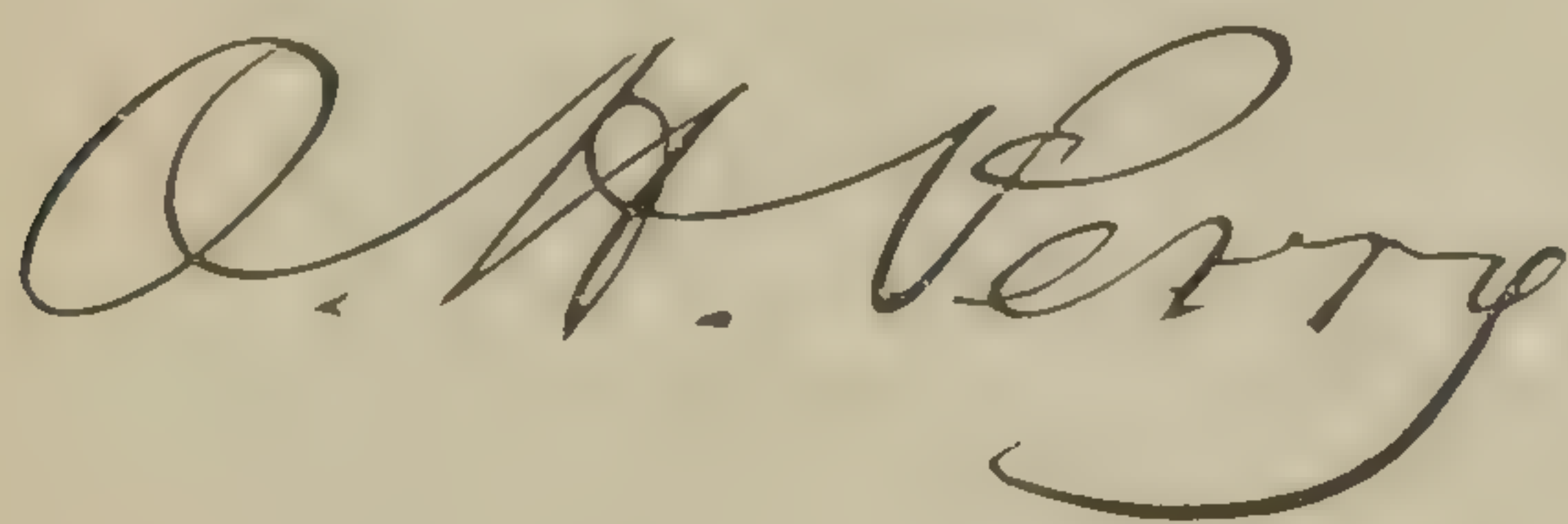
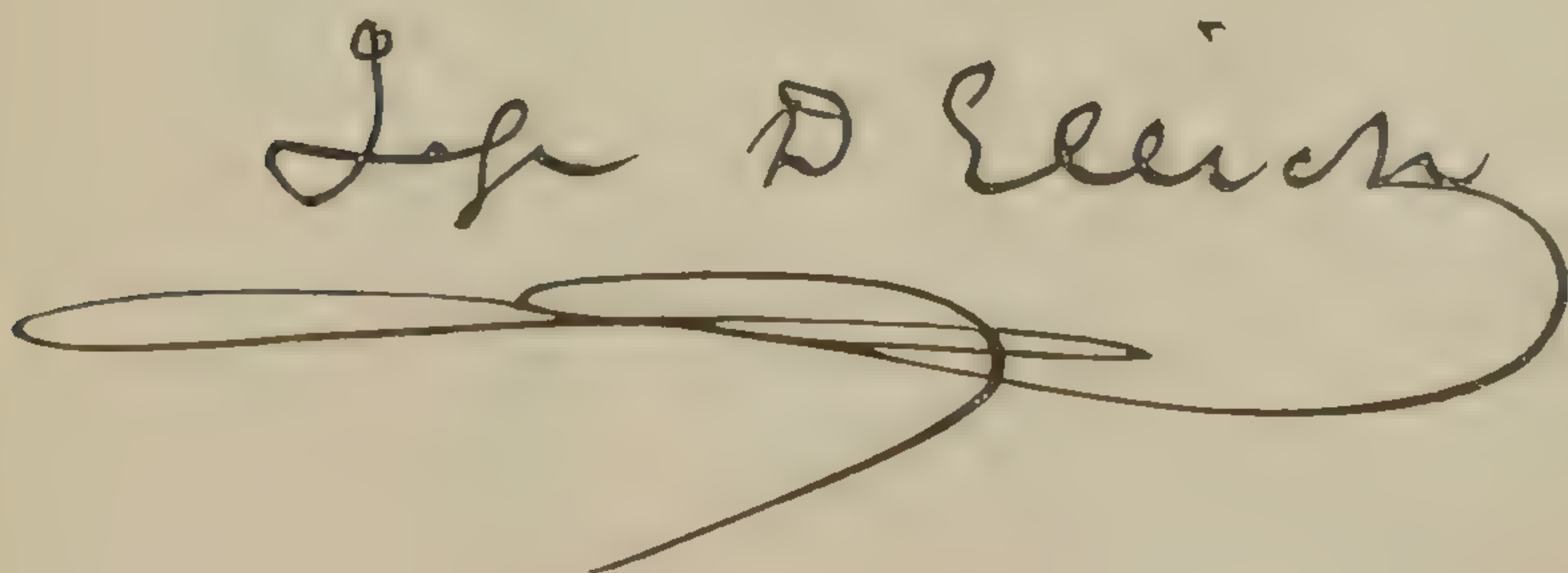
“Saw the old Indian burying-ground and fort, and the articles lately dug up from Indian graves, as coins, wampumpeag, kitchen utensils, chains, iron and silver.” * * *

“Six of us went to the place and worked with spade till near midnight. Took up a well preserved skeleton, eight feet deep.”

When some Indian graves were afterwards opened by another party, Dr. Parsons bought many of the bones and articles found with them, and retained some in his possession at his death. He prepared a paper on this subject, which he read, exhibiting many of the relics, before the historical societies of Rhode Island and New York. This paper was published in the *Historical Magazine*, February, 1863. It describes the customs of the Indians in regard to burial, sketches the history of the Narragansett tribes, and their intercourse with the Dutch, and particularly of Sachem Ninigret and his descendants, and gives a minute account of the discoveries made in the ancient Indian burying-ground, believed to have been the Sachem's cemetery. He states the reasons for supposing that the grave in which the most curious articles were found was that of Sachem Ninigret's daughter; and that the adjoining grave was that of the Sachem himself, who was living when the country he inhabited was first settled by the English.

Dr. Parsons's various labors were recognized by his election to many literary and historical societies. He was a corresponding member of the historical societies of Maine, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Georgia and Wisconsin, the American Antiquarian Society, the Academy of Natural Sciences, &c. He was an active member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and was its Vice-President for Rhode Island from September 1864 till his death. He joined the Rhode Island Historical Society in 1825, and was a useful member of it, making many contributions to its collections and reading several papers at its meetings.

It is well known that a controversy arose between Commodores Oliver H. Perry and Jesse D. Elliott, in relation to the conduct of the latter in the naval battle of September 10, 1813; and that long after Perry's early death, the credit of victory was claimed for Elliott by himself and his friends. Dr. Parsons took

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "O. H. Perry". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large loop at the end of the last name.A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jesse D. Elliott". The signature is more elaborate than the one above, with a long, sweeping underline that loops back under the signature.

a warm and active interest in this dispute. He was strongly attached to Perry and convinced that Elliott's conduct was disgraceful. In conversation, by newspaper articles, by contributions to writings published by others, and lastly in a public historical address, he vindicated the claims of Perry and the truth of history as he understood it, often in terms reflecting severely on Elliott and his defenders.

In January, 1836, Tristram Burges read a discourse before the Rhode Island Historical Society, in which he gave a vigorous account of the battle. In 1839, this was published with copious notes and diagrams of the battle in different positions. Some of these notes were furnished by Dr. Parsons. The "extract from the log-book of the *Lawrence*," was taken from his diary. He contributed many notes to the "Life of Commodore Perry," published in 1840, by Alexander Slidell Mackenzie.

In 1852, having been invited to deliver the stated annual discourse before the Rhode Island Historical Society, he chose for his subject, "the history of the battle of Lake Erie. I have made this choice," he says, "first, because this battle is a part of Rhode Island history, and therefore appropriate to the occasion; secondly, because I could speak of it from personal knowledge; and thirdly, because a very inaccurate and perverted account of it has been written and imposed upon the public by the late J. Fenimore Cooper, Esquire." He narrates the circumstances which led to the formation of a fleet on Lake Erie, the difficulties under which it was created and got afloat, and the reasons why it is regarded as belonging to

Rhode Island history. He relates the incidents of the battle quite fully, and then attacks Elliott and Cooper in a style of indignant sarcasm. In the words of Mr. Arnold: "He has done this in a style that leaves nothing to be said upon the points in dispute. His own testimony is direct and incontrovertible. His reply to the assaults of Cooper is comprehensive and complete. A certain irony pervades this portion of the address, which is the appropriate weapon wherewith to treat mendacity of statement when brought to the support of cowardice of conduct and infamy of character." Dr. Parsons had always a fondness for written controversy, and could handle the caustic pen as well as the scalpel or saw.

In his more advanced life, he became well known in the growing cities along the southern shore of Lake Erie. He often visited that region after his retirement from active practice. Those cities appreciated more and more the importance of Perry's victory, and commemorated its anniversary by yearly gatherings, and occasionally by special observances and various plans for the erection of monuments. Dr. Parsons was the only surviving officer of the battle who had cultivated historical tastes and the powers of writing and oratory.

In 1858, the anniversary was celebrated at Put-in-Bay island, near Sandusky, where Perry's fleet had anchored the night before the battle. There was a very large assemblage, and a brilliant display of yachts and steamers. Hon. Salmon P. Chase presided at the ceremonies on the island. Eloquent addresses were made; and three surviving officers appeared on the platform; Captains Champlin and Brownell speaking

briefly, while Dr. Parsons read an elaborate narrative discourse. This was received with a great deal of interest by the large audience, and was afterward printed in all the principal newspapers of Buffalo, Erie, Sandusky, Cleveland, &c. He afterward wrote in his note-book, "this anniversary was among the most delightful of my life, as well as most interesting."

Two years later the forty-seventh anniversary was celebrated at Cleveland. That city alone successfully carried out the plan of erecting a monument to Perry, which on that day was dedicated. It stands in the park at Cleveland, and consists of a statue of Perry, and of other appropriate sculptures. The dedication, September 10, 1860, was very largely attended. The Governor of Rhode Island with many of her civil and military officers were present by special invitation. The two most important features of the literary exercises on that day, were the oration by Honorable George Bancroft, and a historical address by Dr. Parsons.

These three discourses relating to the battle of Lake Erie, all give the story in essentially the same way, and show some unavoidable repetition. The two delivered at Put-in-Bay and Cleveland are not, however, controversial.

In his later journeys along Lake Erie, Dr. Parsons was regarded as a guest of the public, and was passed and entertained as such on the steamboats and railroads. These various acknowledgments of his early services, and the kind reception of his historical discourses, after he had passed the age of seventy, gave him the keenest pleasure.

Some other published writings, less known than those before mentioned, attest his permanent interest in his naval reminiscences. In 1836, he contributed to the "Naval Lyceum," New York, an article on Quarantines. In 1840, he published in the Knickerbocker Magazine, a story, "The Avenger of Blood," founded on an incident that occurred on board the *Guerrière* in 1818. In 1850, he helped to agitate the question of the abolition of flogging in the navy, and wrote a pungent article on the subject for a New York newspaper. In 1862, he contributed to the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, "Brief sketches of the officers who were in the battle of Lake Erie."

A sketch of Dr. Parsons's career would be very incomplete, if it did not allude to the tenacity with which he clung to early attachments, and the pleasure he took, during his mature and declining years, in revisiting the scenes of his boyhood and youth. Almost every summer, after he had gained an established position in Providence, he went to his native place and the neighboring towns, where he had struggled with poverty and youthful ambition. No recreation gave him greater pleasure. He kept up intimate intercourse and correspondence with the relatives who still lived there.

He also reverted with the deepest interest to the region about Lake Erie, where he had laid the foundations of success. He revisited this region several times, beside the occasions already referred to when he delivered historical discourses. In 1835, he made a tour to Lake Erie, in company with Captain Daniel Turner, who commanded the *Caledonia* in the battle

of September 10, 1813. They went from New York to Albany by steamboat, and thence to Black Rock by canal. The journey by canal occupied three days. Dr. Parsons minutely describes, in his diary, the localities at Black Rock, and enumerates the houses that were standing there in 1812, most of which were destroyed by fire in December, 1813. He could not determine the exact location of the barracks where he had been lodged in 1812. He was joined at Buffalo by Captain Stephen Champlin, who commanded the *Scorpion* in the battle of Lake Erie.* They visited the *Queen Charlotte*, captured from the British in that battle, and afterward sunk in the lake. "A company of merchants lately bought the ships, and have raised the *Queen* and refitted her. The captain received us politely, and gave us some pieces of oak from her to make walking canes. Captains Turner and Champlin and myself, made out an inscription to be put on a gilded cannon ball that is to be slung in her cabin. Said ball was taken out from among her timbers; and, as we stated, was fired by the *Tigris*."

In 1836, Dr. Parsons went to the west in behalf of the "Smithfield Emigrating Land Company." He thus writes, September 4, 1836: "About three weeks since, I caught the western land-fever for speculation, which has ever since occupied my thoughts. Two weeks yesterday I attended a meeting at Scott's pond, and bought four shares. I was chosen member of the

* Captain Daniel Turner, born at Staten Island, New York, August 8, 1792, died in Philadelphia, February 4, 1850. Captain Stephen Champlin, born in South Kingstown, Rhode Island, November 17, 1789, a cousin of Commodore Perry, died at his residence in Buffalo, February 20, 1870.

purchasing committee, to have my expenses paid." He was absent about seven weeks, went from Buffalo to Detroit, thence to Toledo, where he bought a horse for sixty dollars, a saddle, bridle and blanket for twelve. He then travelled horseback to Fort Wayne, Laporte, Chicago, Danville and Indianapolis. His expenses on this journey, as charged to the company, were three hundred and eleven dollars and twenty-five cents, including the purchase of horse and outfit, which were sold for forty-one dollars. He then and subsequently bought land at different points in western states; and some of these investments, after entailing a long continued burden of taxation and other expenses, became profitable many years later.

In 1838, he revisited Erie, after an absence of nearly twenty-four years. In his diary, he mentions Cayuga lake as almost the only place on his route to Buffalo, which he recognized as having seen it on his early march. He arrived in Erie late in the evening of July 5th. "Friday, 6th, visited the court house at seven o'clock. Here I received my wounded of the fleet about the 20th [24th] of September, 1813." He called on many persons with whom he had been very well acquainted for two years; only one recognized him without aid, though many expressed great joy in meeting him. In the burying-ground he looked for the graves of Claxton, who died of a wound received in battle, and of other naval comrades. He writes:—

"I called on Captain Dobbins, who was a sailing-master in the war, now commander of the revenue cutter. I went with him to the Peninsula, [Erie was formerly called Presqu'isle,] and trod once more the deck of the Lawrence, now a hulk

resting about east a quarter of a mile from the old block-house. Her deck is in a sound state; but the water comes nearly up to it, so that I could not see her hold. In this vessel I sailed in 1813, and was in battle. She was repaired the following year, and I went in her to Mackinac with troops under Colonel Croghan. She was sunk and remained so till within the last two or three years, when she was raised and proved to be perfectly sound. Took some pieces from her to make canes of."

The following day he visited James Miles, whose arm he had amputated the day after the battle on Lake Erie. "He did not recollect me; but on learning who I was, shed tears of joy." His diary concludes thus:—

"This visit to Erie gave me indescribable pleasure. The thousand associations of pleasure and of pain; the fresh recollections of events, as if they transpired but yesterday, which a thousand objects served to call up, and many of which would but for this visit never have been revived; the pleasure afforded in taking old friends by the hand, after a separation of twenty-four years; the changes in looks; the changes in worldly condition for better and for worse; the grave-yard where lie the bodies of great numbers of early friends; the changes and vast improvements about the city,—elegant houses and churches where there were then but a few humble dwellings,—all, all tended to render my stay here one of the most intense interest, on many occasions so powerful as to take from me the power of speech. But what shall I say of the protecting mercy of Him who through dangers seen and unseen, perils by land and perils in the deep, has surrounded my path, and preserved me to the present moment? May the remainder of my days be more devoted to His service."

In 1854, after attending the meeting of the American Medical Association at St. Louis, he journeyed to Chicago and St. Paul's, visited the falls of St. Anthony,

and returned by the way of Buffalo, Montreal and Quebec. The next year, he went to Lake Superior, with his nephew Edwin. On his way, he rehearsed on the spot his adventure in the capture of Fort Erie in 1813. He stopped at Mackinac and Sault St. Marie, and examined and described the copper mines at Lake Superior.

For several years before his death, Dr. Parsons was almost wholly withdrawn from active practice, though he sometimes visited in consultation, and even performed some surgical operations. His last amputation was of the fore-arm, performed when he was seventy-four years old, in Rehoboth. His sturdy health of body and mind gradually failed, but with very little suffering, and with many circumstances fitted to make old age happy. An increasing forgetfulness in regard to business matters, and hesitancy in speech and uncertainty in locomotion, showed that his powerful brain was yielding to the natural changes in its texture; but he still enjoyed reading, frequented the Athenæum, called at the houses of a few familiar friends, kept up a rather extensive correspondence, visited his near relatives in Maine and New York city, and interested himself in watching the progress of the Rhode Island Hospital. The exercises at the opening of this hospital took place October 1, 1868. He was conducted to a seat on the platform, and was kindly referred to in Professor Gannell's eloquent discourse. This compliment, the last he was ever to receive on any public occasion, gratified him very much. He wrote in his diary the next day, with a trembling hand, "I feel very happy for yesterday's doings."

He was present at the first important surgical operation performed there, October 10.

On the evening of October 17, after exposure to cold, he had a severe acute attack, involving the brain, and followed by persistent nausea, headache and confusion of mind. He first left the house after this, November 3, when he voted at the presidential election. He continued to go out almost every day for a month more, but with feeble and uncertain steps, and a degree of mental disorder that gave his family great anxiety. From December 4, he was again confined to the house and mostly to his chamber, and died on the morning of December 19, 1868, aged eighty years and four months. He was very faithfully attended in his last sickness by his friend Dr. Stephen S. Keene. An autopsy showed chronic degeneration in the arteries and membranes of the brain, and acute inflammatory disease in the cerebellum. This last probably dated from the 17th of October, and was the immediate cause of death. His funeral was kindly attended by Rev. J. G. Vose, of the Beneficent Congregational church. He was buried in Swan Point cemetery.

On the 1st of June, 1869, Hon. Samuel G. Arnold, President of the Rhode Island Historical Society, read before that body, in accordance with previous appointment, a discourse "On the services of three distinguished members of the society, who died during the year 1868," Albert Gorton Greene, William Read Staples, and Usher Parsons. I have already extracted from this discourse. The portion of it referring to Dr. Parsons closes with the following sentences:—

“Probably no man now living has so complete a knowledge of Indian traditions and history, or is so competent to interpret their meaning, as was Dr. Parsons. In his later years he retired from practice and devoted his time to these favorite pursuits; often making long journeys, even beyond the Mississippi river, always returning with some new discovery in Indian lore, and some vivid impressions of the growing greatness of our country. He was a man in whom the love of country was strongly marked, and whose fidelity to the flag never faltered in the darkest hour. His was a genial temperament and a kindly heart, with much of the jovial spirit of the seas in his hours of relaxation. We miss his familiar form in these seats at our stated meetings, and we miss his cordial greeting and his honest smile in the daily intercourse of life; for there are few families in this city where he was not a welcome guest, and where, during his long residence of nearly half a century among us, his name had not become as a household word. Loved in life and honored in death, his memory will be revered by all who value those high qualities of manhood which were united in his character.”

APPENDIX.

I.

[This sketch of Dr. Parsons's early instructor in classical studies was prepared by him, and is printed from a manuscript found among his papers.]

THE Rev. MOSES SWEAT, A. M., was a native of Kingston, New Hampshire. In his youth he was occupied in the labours of a farmer, and occasionally taught a school. Being very fond of books and particularly interested in the study of the dead languages, he made great progress in them, under the instruction of Parson Moody, then preceptor of Dummer Academy, who encouraged him to expect a tutorship in some college. But Mr. Moody soon died, and his favorite pupil then devoted his time to the study of theology, under the direction of Elihu Thayer, D. D., of Kingston, New Hampshire.

About the year 1788, the Congregational society in Sanford, which then included Alfred, invited Mr. Sweat to become their pastor, offering him a salary of three hundred dollars with a parsonage lot for a settlement, which he accepted, and from this salary he soon, by rigid economy, saved enough to purchase the large Polyglot Bible of ten volumes folio. He then engaged ardently in the study of many of the oriental languages. Greek and Hebrew he could read fluently, and he made some progress in the study of Syriac, Arabic and Chaldaic.

He published two discourses in 1805, entitled "A Critical Investigation of the Mode of Baptism as performed by the primitive churches," about one hundred pages, in which he traced out the words *Bapto* and *Baptizo* in all the oriental languages. The work was so highly appreciated by the learned, that the late Judge Sewall of the United States Court, subscribed for many copies for circulation. The only other publication was a discourse preached at Alfred, on the occasion of its separation from Sanford. It was regarded as ingenious and highly creditable to the author's literary taste and skill.

Dr. Hemmenway and other clergymen in York county, duly estimating his character and attainments, presented his name to the authorities of Harvard College, with a petition to award him the degree of A. B., and, in 1790, he received the degree of A. M.

About ten years after his settlement his health failed and obliged him to suspend his ministerial labours for the term of a year. About the same time the Baptist society made inroads upon his flock, and detached a large number, which made it necessary for those who remained to ask for a reduction of his salary, to which he acceded, and for nearly thirty years he continued his ministerial labours on a salary of one hundred dollars per annum. His large stock of sermons on hand made it unnecessary for him to write many new ones, and he consequently passed most of his time in agricultural pursuits.

After his decease the writer of this sketch received from the children of Mr. Sweat a present of some forty or fifty sermons. Though written in haste, they are faultless in style in every particular, even to punctuation. His composition was made from the purest English. He devoted about ten hours to writing a sermon. There was nothing impassioned in his discourses, but simply appeals to reason and common sense, and they were always practical in their nature and tendency. He affiliated with Arminians as well as with Orthodox brethren, and with those of intermediate shades of opinion. He held to the trinity and believed in the atonement,

but he rarely if ever preached strong doctrinal discourses. Though his voice was feeble he was a rapid speaker, and he made no display of oratorical flourish in his manner. In conversation he was fluent, very instructive and agreeable—in manners mild, meek, affable and gentle. The writer of this, who passed a year in his family in the study of Latin and Greek, can truly say that in all the graces of a christian gentleman and model pastor he never saw his equal. Mr. Sweat died at Sanford, Aug. 30, 1822. He had three sons and two daughters, all of whom have deceased since his death. The Polyglot Bible is to be found in the library of Bowdoin College.

II.

[The following was Dr. Parsons's first medical publication. It was written for the Buffalo Gazette, and appeared in that paper.]

BUFFALO, Tuesday, January 19, 1813.

MESSRS. EDITORS :—

THE last number of your paper contains a request that the physicians in this vicinity will make known to the public their opinion as to the most successful mode of treating the prevailing disease ; and observing a letter in your paper of the 5th inst., containing the sentiments of one of the faculty, which in certain essential points may be deemed incorrect, I send you this reply.

DR. JOHN ROSS :—

While pleased with the judicious introductory remarks of your communication on the disease which prevails in this section of the country, I am led to disagree with you in the propriety of laying aside blood-letting. Previous to showing the utility of this remedy, I must inform you that your failure of success, of which you speak, while practising it, proceeded from your attending too much to the general state of the system, without sufficiently regarding the local affection. A con-

vincing proof of this is, you altogether mistook the seat of the disease in considering it to be in the right hypochondrium, when it is in the thorax, and is nothing more nor less than pneumonia or pleurisy.

In confirmation of this, I will venture to say a more accurate description of the disease now prevailing cannot be given than the one by Dr. Cullen, in his treatise on pleurisy. Besides, of more than seventy cases that have fallen under my care, but little variation in the symptoms has been observable, except in violence and duration. And, that the seat and nature of the disease might be thoroughly understood, the bodies of six patients, which were nearly all that died, and these where the disease first made its appearance, were carefully examined. The following were the appearances in the thorax ; the lungs highly inflamed, adhered firmly to the pleura, in some places were so sphacelated that no vestige of organic structure remained, and in no place exhibited a healthy appearance. The pleura had a livid appearance. The diaphragm and pericardium had the same, and were much thickened. In no case were the contents of the right hypochondrium in any degree diseased except that the superior surface of the liver was slightly inflamed, which might be ascribed to its contiguity to the diaphragm. This state of the thoracic viscera precisely corresponds with that which medical authors tell us appears in bodies where death is produced by pleurisy. Therefore your aversion, Sir, to blood-letting, singular as it is, can as easily be accounted for, as your opinion that the prevailing epidemic (pleurisy) "is new to the physicians in this part of the world."

In attempting the cure of the pleurisy, "the remedy chiefly to be relied upon is that of bleeding at the arm." With this I have commenced the treatment of every case that has come under my care, and have invariably found it relieve the most distressing complaints. In some patients, the pulse after the first bleeding being very low deterred me from repeating the operation, although the pain and difficult respiration returned. These cases terminated fatally ; and in reflecting upon them, I am pained with the belief that, had the use of the lancet

been repeated as often as the distressing symptoms returned, the life of every patient might have been saved. “ Sometimes the second bleeding may be larger than the first. There are persons who by their constitution are ready to faint, even upon a small bleeding ; and in such persons this may prevent the drawing so much blood at first as a pneumonic inflammation might require ; but as the same persons are frequently found to bear after-bleedings better than the first, this allows the second and subsequent bleedings to be larger. It is according to the state of the symptoms, that bleedings are to be repeated ; and they will be more effectual, when practised in the course of the three first days than afterwards ; but they are not to be omitted though four days of the disease may have elapsed.”

Early in the disease I have derived evident advantage from the application of blisters directly over the pained part. Translating a part of the morbid action of the lungs to the glandular system, by such medicines as will induce salivation, has invariably produced a salutary termination of the disorder. For this purpose I have exhibited calomel and opium combined in small doses, and applied mercurial unction externally. Small doses of nitre and tartar-emetic, given several times in the course of a day, not only act as a gentle laxative, but tend to promote perspiration and expectoration, two symptoms denoting a favorable crisis.

This mode of practice, both theory and experience teach me to be the most rational and successful ; and it has the sanction of perhaps every writer on medicine. You will not receive these remarks, Sir, as an attack on your professional character, nor as expressive of a wish to commence newspaper controversy. I am actuated principally by a desire to remove from the minds of my patients any undue prejudice against the use of the lancet, which the publication of your sentiments may occasion.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant.

III.

ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE, EXTRACTED
FROM DR. PARSONS'S DIARY.

PUT-IN-BAY, Friday, September 10.

AT five o'clock, A. M., discovered the enemy's squadron bearing North West, wind South West. At seven could see all the vessels, viz:—two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop. At ten called all hands to quarters. At quarter before meridian the enemy commenced the action at one mile distance. In half an hour we came within musket shot of the enemy's new ship *Detroit*. At this time they opened a most destructive fire on the *Lawrence* from their whole squadron. At half past one, so entirely disabled we could work the brig no longer. At two P. M., most of the guns were dismounted, breechings gone or carriages knocked to pieces. At half past two, when not another gun could be worked or fired from the *Lawrence*, Captain Perry hauled down the fighting flag, which bore this motto, *Don't give up the ship*, repaired on board the *Niagara*, and there raised it again. In ten minutes after, we struck to the enemy. Captain Perry made all sail with the *Niagara*, which hitherto had kept out of the action, and in fifteen minutes passed in among the British squadron, having the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte* and *Lady Prevost* on the starboard side, and the *Hunter* on the larboard side, and silenced them all, and ten minutes before three they hauled down their colors. Two small vessels attempted to escape, but being overhauled struck a few minutes after three.

Killed on board the *Lawrence*, Lieutenant John Brooks, Midshipman Henry Laub, James W. Allen, Joseph Kennady, John C. Kelly, John Smith, William Cranson, Andrew Michael, John Hoffman, Charles Pohig, Nelson Peters, James Jones, John Rose, James Carty, Thomas Butler, Wilson May, Christian Mayo, Charles Johnes, Eatheldras Sykes, and three others; sixty-three wounded.

Slept but little, and dressed about one-third, and secured with tourniquets such as bled copiously. During the action I cut off six legs in the cockpit, which were nearly divided by cannon balls.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HIS FATHER.

“NEAR THE HEAD OF LAKE ERIE,)
 ON BOARD THE U. S. SLOOP LAWRENCE, }
 September 22, 1813. }

“ Before the arrival of this an account of our victorious engagement with the British squadron on this Lake will reach you. I can only add a few particulars. Most of the action was supported by this vessel, as you will suppose when informed that out of one hundred and fifty men (our ship's crew), thirty-one of whom were sick previous to the action, we had rising eighty killed and wounded, among whom were nearly all our officers save the intrepid Commodore. On board all the others were about thirty killed and wounded. This vessel was engaged with the enemy's two ships on one side and a brig astern raking us for two hours, all within musket-shot, during which we rendered the ships unmanageable, and when this vessel could not discharge another gun the Commander repaired on board the Niagara; and within fifteen minutes after he arrived within close action with them, the enemy's three vessels struck.

Unfortunately for the wounded, the two surgeons had been confined for several days with fever, and could render them but little assistance. It has however operated in my favor, as I have had all the amputations to perform ; and it affords me the greatest pleasure to reflect that in no case have I failed of the best success. This has inclined the Commodore's opinion so much in my favor that I have no doubt he will render me assistance towards obtaining a better situation. He is the first warm friend I have met with in the service capable of assisting me. I am now on my way in the Lawrence for Erie, having all the sick and wounded of the squadron on board, and shall continue in the hospital with them till they in a measure recover, and will then direct my course toward Cape Home.

General Harrison was on board the Lawrence this morning, and his army was on an island within half a mile of the vessel. It is supposed to consist of at least eight hundred regulars, militia and Indians. To-morrow they cross to Malden, a distance of about eighteen miles. Since the capture of the

British squadron, the Indians have evacuated Detroit, after burning the place, and (as is reported) massacring the inhabitants. The enemy's squadron mounted more guns than ours, and carried more men by at least one-fourth. I had some narrow escapes for my life during the action. Five cannon balls passed through the room in which I was attending to the wounded. Two of the men I had dressed and laid aside in the commencement of the action were killed, before it closed, by other shots.

I have had very poor health all the cruise, am reduced to a skeleton, but am recovering. Never will I cruise again on this lake or any other. The action was fought within about ten miles of Malden. The enemy came out over night for the purpose of attacking us, and in the morning were within about fourteen miles of us, the wind in their favor. We made sail to meet them, and the wind changed in our favor, which gave us an advantage over them. They had more killed and wounded than we."

IV.

FROM THE DIARY OF HIS JOURNEY TO LOUISBURG,
AUGUST 1852.

"ON our arrival in Sidney we found a boat just down from Upper or South Sidney some miles up the river; some pleasant people on board, three ladies. Dined at a private boarding house, and took an open buggy with two horses and driver. Left at quarter before three for Louisburg, twenty-six miles distant. Rode twelve miles to Miray River, over a very good road. We passed not more than ten or twelve houses and very poor. Very small portion of the land is cleared; covered chiefly with fur, spruce, hemlock, hackmatack. In some places there is birch, beech, maple, and abundance of alder bushes; no oak nor pine. There is very little granite, but a sort of coarse sandstone. The surface and covering of the earth resembles the lower part of Maine, and is very

rocky most of the way. Crossed several bridges. The settlers are mostly Irish and highland Scotch; very few New Englanders. The cleared land presents stumps of small size and three to four feet high, the trees being cut in winter when snow is three feet deep on a level, and lasts four or five months. Oats, and barley, and some wheat, and many potato-patches, are along the road. Land is said to be poor, excepting on the river shores where it is very good. There is no good timber-land. The houses are very poor, and mostly log-cabins.

“Beyond Miray, the land is very poor, rocky and thinly settled. Two or three Scotch families appear to be thrifty, and have some good cattle. The road is little better than a cow-path, hilly and stony. The River Miray runs up some forty or fifty miles, and is one half to three quarters of a mile wide. The bays make in from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, viz: Miray and the Main-a-dieu (?), to near the road we are travelling.

“We arrived in Louisburg at eight o'clock, approaching it from the West, and descending to the harbor near the royal battery, then skirted along the shore southerly, and then crossing a bridge went into the old fortifications in a southerly direction, following near to the shore from the grand battery to the west gate which is at the water's edge.

“We had a letter from Judge Dodd to Mr. Kennedy, an Irishman seventy years old, whose one-story neat looking house outside is near the water, and between the west gate and the Governor's house, the ruins of which remain. It stands on a small indentation of the shore, and was inclosed by a chain boom that stretched across from near the west gate to a point of land projecting out.

“August 23. Rose early and looked out upon the harbor. An Irish fisherman living a few rods east pointed out the place of the grand battery in front of us, about four-fifths of a mile distant and a little on our left. On our right stood the light-house point, an elevated headland, and on our right the island-battery and the Green battery farther out. Right in front of us was the N. E. harbor, running two miles, inclining at the head to the right. About fifteen or twenty dwellings

of small size skirted the bank that rose from the water backward, so that the whole harbor or basin seems like the arena of an immense amphitheatre, the land rising up backward and mostly cleared for half to three-quarters of a mile back, and dotted irregularly with huts, and a small catholic church stands half way up the ascent in a north direction.

“ On the tongue of land that projects off into the sea as far as island-battery, the end of which ranges nearly in a line with the island-battery and light-house, was the site of the ancient fortress. The line of wall stretched from the west gate in a south-east direction across the land to the ocean, and a plan of it is laid down in maps. Near the south-east termination of this ancient wall, and outside of it, was an immense iron-stone rock forming a sort of cliff on the ocean. From this, much of the stone was taken to build the fortification, and a hundred cartloads, that had been got out by drilling, lie in piles near it. The drill-holes still remain visible; the stone is dark and resembles basalt. It seems to be as imperishable. Near the end of the tongue of land was the ancient burying-ground, and some remains of the graves are yet visible. But near the water was a large battery that terminated the land, and within it a glacis and trench.

“ We landed from the island battery near this old mound, and after bathing walked toward the ancient city by the street that passed the south side of the hospital. Passed another battery parallel with the first; and over grass ground, to the old ruins of the hospital, chapel and nunnery, the stones of which are down almost to a level with the grass land. We then passed the site of the Governor's house, and last the Secretary's, in front of which were the public civil offices. The Governor's house stood within four rods of the water. Arches that supported it are remaining. The facing stone of the public building was a white tufa or seeming sand-stone. Many cargoes of the bricks are carried to Halifax and Sidney, and also of the facing-stone above mentioned; and many cargoes still remain. On one of the white facing-stones I noticed the name, “ I. Gridley, 1745,” neatly carved or engraved. Isaac Gridley was chief engineer under Pepperrell in 1745.

“Many barrels of old iron, as hinges, spikes, horse-shoes, bolts, kettles &c., have been discovered here, and a barrel full is now in Mr. Kennedy’s store, and he has sold many. He has broken up and sold a dozen cannon as old iron, and half a dozen are lying about the cliff. The arches in the casemates were three stories high,—the arch itself making one. The timbers supporting the floors were a foot square, and the ends of them are still visible.

V.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF DR. PARSONS, FROM MEMORANDA IN HIS HANDWRITING.

- 1809. Pettifogger’s Soliloquy, in verse; *Freeman’s Friend*, Saco.
- 1811. Book of Chronicles, 2 chapters; *Boston Scourge*.
- 1813. On pleuro-pneumonia, addressed to Dr. John Ross; *Buffalo Gazette*.
- 1818. Gunshot wounds through the Thorax; *New England Journal of Medicine and Surgery*.
- 1818. Surgical account of the Naval Battle on Lake Erie; *New England Journal of Medicine and Surgery*.
- 1819. Letter to Hon. John Holmes, from Isle of Wight; *Eastern Argus*.
- 1820. Sailor’s Physician, 1 vol. 8 vo.; Cambridge.
- 1824. Physician for Ships, a 2d edition of the above, with additions, (2000 copies.)
- 1824. Poison of Rattle-snake cured by whiskey; *Philadelphia Medical Recorder*.
- 1826. Epilepsy cured by galvanism; *New England Journal of Medicine and Surgery*.
- 1826. Introductory Lecture on Anatomy and Physiology; Brown University.
- 1827. Boylston Prize Dissertation on Periostitis.

1827. On Introduction of medicines into the veins; *Philadelphia Medical Recorder*.
1829. Review of Allen's Mechanics; *American Journal of Science*.
1829. Boylston Prize Dissertation on Eneuresis Irritata; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1829. Case of poisoning by tartar-emetic; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1830. Boylston Prize Dissertation on Cutaneous Diseases, &c.; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1830. On Animal and Vegetable Decomposition as a cause of fever. *Ib.*
1830. Discussion on the above, with Dr. James Jackson of Boston. *Ib.*
1831. Address on Temperance, Providence.
1831. Art of making Anatomical Preparations; 1 vol. 8 vo., Philadelphia.
1832. Review of Allen's "Practical Tourist;" *American Journal of Science*.
1833. Remarks on Phrenology; *Literary Journal, Providence*.
1834. Biography of Dr. Solomon Drowne; *Literary Journal, Providence*.
1835. Boylston Prize Dissertation on Cancer of the Breast; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1836. On Quarantines; *United States Naval Lyceum*.
1838. Genealogy of the family of Joseph Parsons.
1839. Boylston Prize Dissertations, 1 vol. 8vo., with a history of the fund and a notice of its founder.
1840. Brief account of Early Physicians and Medical Society of Rhode Island; *American Quarterly Register*.
1840. Lecture on connection and reciprocal influence between Brain and Stomach, before American Institute of Instruction, Providence.
1840. The Avenger of Blood; *Knickerbocker Magazine*.
1842. Notice of Dr. Jeremiah Williams; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1842. Fiske Fund Prize Dissertation on Spinal Diseases.
1842. Physician for Ships; 3d edition, with new notes, &c.

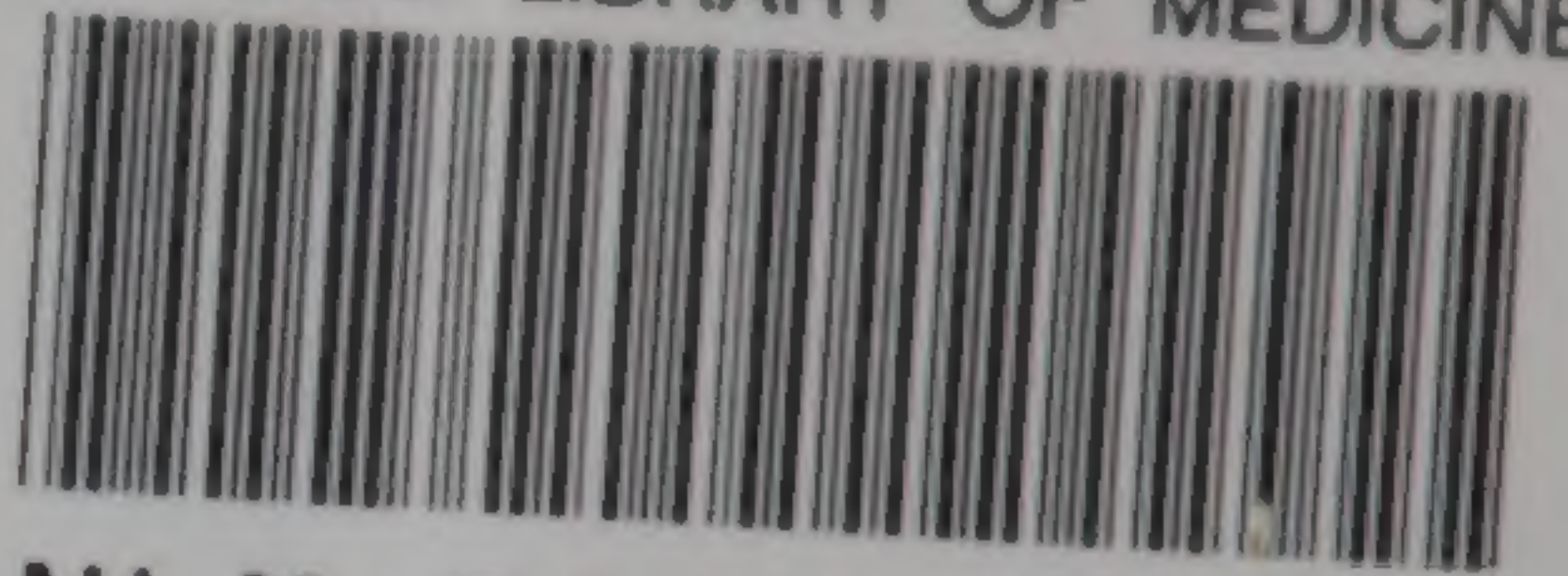
1843. Notice of Dr. Niles Manchester; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1848. Statistics of large Surgical operations; *American Journal of Medical Sciences*.
1849. Memoir of Charles Frost; *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.
1849. Report of Committee on Adulteration of Drugs; *Transactions of American Medical Association*.
1850. Report of Committee on Medical Sciences; *Transactions of American Medical Association*.
1850. Article on prohibition of flogging in the Navy; *Sunday Dispatch*.
1851. Physician for Ships: 4th edition.
1851. Report of case of removal of uterus, by ligature; *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.
1852. Discourse on the Battle of Lake Erie, delivered before the Rhode Island Historical Society.
1853. Genealogy of the Frost family, of York county, Maine.
1854. Address before American Medical Association, at St. Louis.
1855. Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart., the only native of New England who was created a Baronet during its connection with the mother country; Boston; (London, 1856.)
1858. Address on the Battle of Lake Erie; delivered at Put-in-Bay Island.
1858. Notice of Descendants of Peter Hill of York county, Maine; *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.
1859. Sketches of Rhode Island Physicians deceased prior to 1850, &c.; *Transactions of Rhode Island Medical Society*.
1860. Notices of Dr. Walter V. Wheaton and Judge Haliburton; *Providence Journal*.
1860. Address on Battle of Lake Erie; delivered at Cleveland, Ohio.
1860. On the importance of culture of Flax; *Transactions of Rhode Island Society for Encouragement of Domestic Industry*.

1861. Indian Names of Places in Rhode Island.
1861. Letter on some points of Military Surgery; *Transactions of Rhode Island Medical Society*.
1862. Brief Sketches of the officers who were in the Battle of Lake Erie; *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.
1863. Lecture on Indian Relics; *Historical Magazine*.
1863. Letter to Mr. George Livermore, on services rendered by negroes in the war of 1812; *Proceedings of Massachusetts Historical Society*.
1867. Physician for Ships; 5th edition.

[This list includes all his known published writings, except some newspaper articles and brief contributions to medical journals.]



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